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THE LIBRARY FROM EXETER COLLEGE GARDENS

*Pyramis*

# **A Bodleian Guide for Visitors**

**By**

**Andrew Clark**

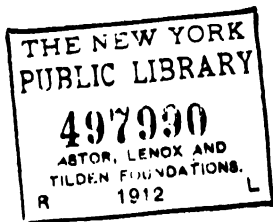
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## PREFATORY NOTE

**THE Bodleian Library, in mere size, ranks as the sixth library in the world. It contains, on a reasonable estimate, 685,000 volumes of printed, and 33,000 of manuscript matter; and increases yearly at the rate of 15,000 bound printed volumes, and about fifty manuscripts. These bound printed volumes contain between a million and a million and a half of separate volumes or pamphlets. Of libraries within the British Empire it is surpassed only by the British Museum. Of all libraries which depend on semi-private resources, and are without subvention by the state or the rates, the Bodleian is the largest and most important.**

**In historical rank, it takes a foremost place, being one of the oldest public libraries in Europe. To pass over its pre-Reformation history, it is enough to say that since November 8, 1602, its doors have been open, and its ever accumulating treasures have been accessible, to all graduates of Oxford and to all duly accredited scholars from all lands.**

**The Bodleian was, for a very long time, one of the few considerable public libraries in Protestant countries; and year by year earnest students from Denmark, North Germany,**

and Hungary, settled in Oxford for prolonged abode for its sake. Between 1688 and 1714 no less than 244 foreigners were admitted regular readers in the library, to say nothing of the constant flow of visitors from overseas who included it in their view of the sights of Oxford. These numbers are, of course, largely exceeded now. In 1895-7 no fewer than 118 new readers were admitted from the United States alone.

Part of this great treasury of books is open, as a show-place, on every week-day in the year except Good Friday and Christmas Day, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 4 p.m., or 5 p.m. (according to the season of the year), at the easy rate of 3*d.* for each person not franked by a member of the University in his academical dress. This brief guide sets out, after a simple and straightforward method, the chief things which absolute strangers can see, for themselves, within the library and without; and adds the outstanding facts as to its history and fortunes. A glance over its pages, on the evening before going to the library, will prepare visitors to look out for the objects in which they are most interested. A more leisurely perusal, in the favourite armchair at home, will help to recall the arrangements of Oxford's great library.

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*To face page*

Delegates of the Press. Two barred windows, half-underground, one on each side of the doorway, give light to the cells of the University prison, to which the Proctors may consign offenders, prior to their appearance in the Vice-Chancellor's Court (p. 25). Through the open passage are seen (p. 7) the houses on the opposite side of Broad Street. On the left we have a back view of two of the grotesque heads which surmount the pillars of the semi-circular fence on the north of the Sheldonian.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE SITE AND THE BUILDINGS

THE best starting-point for a visit to the Bodleian is in Cat Street, just in front of Hertford College. Cat Street, now wrongly called Catherine Street, in our oldest times was a narrow lane which led from High Street to a postern in the north wall of Oxford. It ran between a multitude of tumble-down houses, the abodes of scribes, illuminators, binders of manuscripts, parchment-makers. It is fitting that the sumptuous buildings which have replaced the old should be so many of them connected with books.

#### *The 1619 Schools.*

On the west side of Cat Street, towards its northern end, stands a noble pile of buildings three stories high. In the centre is a square tower of five stories, crowned with a fretted battlement which encloses a leaded roof. On each side of this tower each story of the building has symmetrically three bays of windows, each of four lights. The letters T. B., which appear

## 2 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

among the grotesques on the cornice of the oriel window of the tower, commemorate the fact that Sir Thomas Bodley contributed (p. 101) to the fabric.

This building, by origin, is 'the Schools' of the University. It was erected, by subscription, between 1613 and 1619, on the site of still older (1439) 'Schools', to provide lecture-rooms for the Professors of Languages and Sciences, and rooms in which were held those disputations in grammar, logic, and the philosophies, moral and natural, wherein if Jacobean students did not actually delight, they at least spent much time. Practically the whole building has now passed from its first uses to the purposes of the Bodleian Library, and is crammed, in every story, and in every room, from floor to ceiling, with printed books or manuscripts.

### *The Schools Gateway.*

The wooden door which closes the gateway deserves attention. Its two folds are divided into twenty-eight panels, twenty of which have each a coat of arms. Reading from left to right, from the top corner, we find the arms of the University, of the King, of the Prince of Wales, followed by the arms of seventeen Colleges in the order of Academic precedence. University College,

## THE SCHOOLS GATEWAY 3

with its foundation by King Alfred yet as unassailed by the critic as the story of the burnt cakes, leads off; and the series is closed by Wadham College, founded 1612,



and so the baby among the Colleges in 1619 when these Schools were finished. Oxford at that time, having in twenty years received

#### 4 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

more benefactions than it had done in the preceding half-century, was naturally very hopeful of favours to come. Eight panels, therefore, were provided in which coats of new Colleges might be added. Four Colleges have since come, though their arms have not been carved in place; but the tale contemplated in 1619 is still incomplete.

The arms of the University in the top left panel are: on a blue ground, between three gold crowns, an open book, which now bears the motto *Dominus illuminatio mea*. The book is ornamented with gold edges, and has on one side seven half-thongs with seals attached, and on the other side the half-thongs which have been cut to allow of the book being opened. The book clearly alludes to the 'book with seven seals', opened by the Lamb, cf. Rev. v. 1, 5. The crowns may refer to those 'cast before the throne', Rev. iv. 10; and the number has been conjectured to be emblematic of the Trinity. The motto, meaning *The Lord is my light*, is the Latin title of Psalm xxvii. At the beginning of the seventeenth century its use had not been fixed; and, as we shall find, other mottoes were then found on the book in the University arms.

The oddest point about this gateway, though one a visitor is not likely to remark on, is



THE SCHOOLS GATEWAY

*To face p. 4]*





that it is shut. By a strange tradition, shut it always is, except on two days in the year. On one day in March it opens at 2 p.m. to receive the new Proctors, coming, each with his attendant College, to claim, in Convocation House, admission to that office. On one day in June it opens at noon to admit the long procession, glowing in the scarlets of full academical dress, in which Vice-Chancellor, Doctors, Proctors, and those visitors whom the University delights to honour, go to the Sheldonian Theatre for the chief function of the year, Commemoration. These two exceptions are survivals from the use of the building as 'the Schools'. The Proctors were of old the lords paramount of the Schools; and these, therefore, must welcome their new rulers with open gates. Commemoration has taken the place of the Act, the function which closed the Schools after the noisy academic year and consigned them to the quiet of the Long Vacation; and so the Act procession must pass through their chief gate.

*Beating the Bounds.*

Admission being denied here, we turn to the left, to the southern side of the building. Here we find, at the south-west corner, the high garden wall of Exeter College, over which

## 6 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

droop the boughs of a great old chestnut-tree, called Bishop Heber's tree, because the poet-bishop's undergraduate rooms in Brasenose College looked into its mount of blossoming cones. Go up to the wall of the Schools here, and you will find, under the westernmost window, a St. Andrew's cross  $\times$  cut in the stone, and rubbed over with chalk. That is a mark of an old-world custom, now vanishing from England, and therefore not to be passed by unnoticed. In old days, on each Ascension Day, the parson, the churchwardens, the clerk, the parishioners, and especially the boys of each parish, walked round its limits, marking the important points, and beating some boys at each mark that they might remember the spot and be able to tell it in after years. The cross in the wall here marks the point where St. Mildred's parish (coming from the west) ended, and St. Mary's the Virgin parish began. Here, though now built over at its northern end, ran from St. Mary's Church to the north wall a street, where every house was let out in rooms to accommodate the Masters and Scholars of mediaeval Oxford, and which therefore took the name of 'the Schools Street'. The street is built over; St. Mildred's church disappeared five centuries ago; its parish has been for as long merged in





TOWER OF THE FIVE ORDERS

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St. Michael's; but on each Ascension Day St. Michael's clerk still marks his bounds with chalk, and St. Michael's choir-boys, not without hurrahs, still with peeled willow wands beat the mark the clerk has made. On the north side of the Schools the corresponding cross will be found, new cut in stone because the boys' wands had broken the old one.

*Entrance to the Quadrangle.*

Return a few steps to the oblong archway, and mark the long vista. It passes right through both wings of the Schools; over the open space beyond (the line of the old city wall); through the Old Clarendon Building (on the site of the city moat), into Broad Street which is in the north suburb of Oxford. If a brilliant sun favours your visit, fine effects of shade and light may be seen, as pert boy or grave student, traversing the courts, passes in and out of the gloom and the shine. This passage leads us to the Great Quadrangle of the Schools.

*Tower of the Five Orders.*

Taking our stand in this quadrangle, towards its western side, and looking at the gateway Tower (p. 1), we note how its five stories have been made use of to set

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forth Andrea Palladio's (d. 1580) 'Five Orders of Roman Architecture', passing from the Tuscan, solid and unadorned, upward through Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, to the deeply carved, slighter Composite on the sky-line.

As originally planned, the chamber over the Tower archway housed a mathematical library provided by Sir Henry Savile, in 1619, for the use of, and to be under the charge of, his Professors of Geometry and Astronomy. In 1834 this chamber was assigned to the Bodleian for storage of early printed books; and named 'the Mason room' in honour of the great benefaction of Robert Mason, D.D., Queen's College. The Savilian library was then removed to a room on the staircase to the right, and in 1884 the whole care of it was assigned to the Bodleian. The top chamber of the Tower, and the leads over it, furnished an observatory whence the Professor of Astronomy might study the stars; but Oxford meteorology and astronomy have long outgrown their seventeenth-century home and must now be sought for, far to the north, in the Tower of the Winds at the Radcliffe Observatory, or in the University Observatory in the Parks. The middle window, conspicuous by the glister of painted glass, represents the passage of the Picture Gallery (p. 65) through

## TOWER OF THE FIVE ORDERS 9

the Tower. The room above it, behind the carved figures, was assigned to the Keeper of the Archives for the safe custody of the University registers and muniments. He alone of the original occupants of the Schools retains his province here. He has even enlarged it by annexing the old observatory room overhead. Access to the rooms in the Tower is gained painfully by a narrow, winding staircase. The door of this is found within the archway, and its turret-top is conspicuous above at the north-west corner of the Tower.

The size and solidity of the Tower can be appreciated only by standing in the very centre of the archway. The groining of the roof is of an excellence attained only by having followed good Oxford examples from the elder days of architecture. To this Tower and its staircase are attached some quaint stories of seventeenth-century Oxford.

The carved figures near the top of the Tower reproduce wasted originals which represented James I, seated on his throne, giving with his right hand a volume of his writings to Fame, who trumpets their excellence, and with his left hand a similar volume to Mother University, who receives it in kneeling homage. Beneath is a Latin inscription, letting the world know that the

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whole of this great fabric of the Schools was erected for learned uses 'in the reign of the Lord James, of kings the most learned, most munificent, and altogether best'. When first put up, inscription and figures were double-gilt, and shone bravely in the sun, an effect which can be guessed at by the splendour of the royal arms which are seen blazoned over the archway. Their present nakedness perpetuates a whim of the sapient James. Visiting Oxford in 1619, he pronounced the show 'owre braw for Jamie', and, with an access of modesty unusual to him, desired the glory to be toned down by a coat of whitewash. On the canopy is James I's motto—*Beati pacifici*, i.e. 'Blessed are the peacemakers'. Higher up is the figure of Justice with sword and scales; having on her right hand Peace, and on her left Plenty, with full horn.

Thomas, third baron Fairfax, the Parliamentary general, at his death in 1671, bequeathed to the Library Roger Dodsworth's MSS., eighty-six volumes of extreme value for genealogists. The month of June, 1675, was a month of incessant rain, which soaked the precious volumes on their slow passage by carrier's wagon from Yorkshire to Oxford. Happily the young and enthusiastic antiquary, Anthony Wood, prevailed on the Librarian to have them laid for the time on



## TOWER OF THE FIVE ORDERS 11

the floor of the Archives Room. He then spent the month of July in drying them thoroughly on the leads of the Tower. Their stained leaves still show the destruction which full surely awaited them had they been locked up undried in the Library cupboards.

The Tower staircase played its part in a most animated scene in 1681. The Whigs had come to the Parliament called at Oxford for March 21, in full confidence that the King's financial straits would force him to accept their bill excluding his Romanist brother from the succession. The Commons met in the Convocation house in the Theatre Yard behind us. The Lords were assigned the Geometry School here, on the first floor next the chamber over the vault, ascending to it by that broad and easy staircase in the north-east corner. Charles, at last assured of French gold, came quietly in a sedan-chair to the Lords about ten on Monday, March 28, bringing secretly behind him in another sedan-chair, with drawn curtains, the robes necessary for the ceremony of dissolving Parliament. All things being ready, at half-past ten he sent for the Commons. They came trooping into the Quadrangle, expecting a speech from the throne, intimating that Charles would give

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way. They found themselves required to climb, one by one, up the narrow stair in the corner of the gateway tower, only to be thrust (the Speaker and some few of them) through a side-door into the Lords, where the King, duly robed, was waiting to dissolve Parliament with a curt sentence. We can picture the anger and the consternation which prevailed when those who had reached the presence came back to the Quadrangle to tell the waiting mass that Parliament was no more, and that their necks were at the King's mercy.

### *The Schools Quadrangle.*

Here, over the north passage, two angels support a shield, on which were once blazoned the arms of the University. Over the south passage is a Latin inscription in honour of William Herbert, earl of Pembroke, elected Chancellor of the University in 1617 when these schools were rising. The shield beneath was once blazoned with the coat of Herbert, three white lions rampant on a field parted blue and red, as may be seen in the arms of Pembroke College. The University had great hopes from this Chancellor. His children were dead; he was on ill terms with his countess; the estates and honours were to pass to his brother. He was a man of

## THE SCHOOLS QUADRANGLE 13

such munificence that, possessing an income of £22,000 a year, he died £80,000 in debt. In 1629 he bought and sent to the Bodleian the valuable collection of Greek manuscripts formed by Giacomo Barocci of Venice ; but his death next year, with no will assigning anything to Oxford, brought Oxford expectations to nothing. The manner of his death, as reported in a lying story, gave renewed life to the study of astrology in Oxford and elsewhere. Years before, his nativity had been calculated, and the stars were found to portend death for him on April 10, 1630. He was, superstition said, in high spirits on that day in his London house, finding the prediction false ; but died early next morning of an apoplectic stroke.

Some other slight matters call for a moment's thought. It is seen at once that the greater part of the fabric has been recently refaced. The freestone-quarries at Headington and Taynton, near Oxford, from which old Oxford was built, yielded a plentiful supply of building stone, easily worked, but with the fatal defect of crumbling before our wasting south-west wind. Most buildings of any antiquity have had to be refaced, at great cost, every sixty years or so. It is hoped that the stone from the famous quarries at Bath, made accessible by the

## 14 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

railway, will prove more weatherly. In one of the most extensive of these refacings, involving the complete restoration of the windows, a great architectural mistake was made. The windows, as replaced, were left divided only by tall stone shafts, which give them a cold, bare look. Formerly they had been subdivided by transoms in two or three tiers, and thus had a richer, more completed look, as may be seen in the middle window of the Tower.

The disposition of the buildings, apart from the Tower, can be seen at a glance. The whole of the top story is occupied by the great Picture Gallery (p. 57). The lower story supplied six 'Schools'; the middle story, other six, to which access was gained by square stairways in the corners. Over each door is written in Latin in letters of gold the purpose which it formerly served. All these Schools, with their staircases, are now book-stores of the Bodleian. Since their doors are open only when a book is being fetched to the Library reading-room or returned to its shelf, the quadrangle has a repellent, not-at-home look. Coming by chance into it, in February, 1906, I found an old man trying door after door. He turned round to me and said plaintively, 'If this is your Bodleian

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Library, how do you get into it? I've tried eight doors, and they're all locked; and over them something inscribed in a language which I do not understand.' He had begun perversely at the north-west corner, and, going continuously forward, had not yet reached the one door which would serve his purpose.

In 1901 the corbels of the doors of these Schools were adorned with eight pairs of heads of worthies connected with learning and with Oxford. This is the series, beginning at the north-west corner:—(1) Plato and Aristotle, so long and so deeply studied here; (2) Margaret, Countess of Richmond, who died 1509, foundress in 1502 of the Lady Margaret professorship of divinity, the earliest endowed chair in the University, and William Tyndale, died 1536, the Oxford translator of the Bible into English; (3) Richard Fox, bishop of Winchester, died 1528, founder of Corpus Christi College, and Cardinal Wolsey, died 1530, real founder of Christ Church; (4) learned Sir Thomas More, died 1535, and pious Dean Colet, died 1519, Oxford students both of them; (5) William Camden, died 1623, founder of our professorship of Ancient History, and John Selden, died 1654, whose library was so notable an accession to the Bodleian; (6) Thomas Linacre,

## THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

1524, humanist and father of modern medicine, and Sir Henry Savile, died 1622, whose benefaction has been already mentioned (p. 8), two famous Merton men; (7) *Archbishop Laud*, died 1645, and *Edward, Lord Clarendon*, died 1674, two great *Chancellors of Oxford*; and (8), nearest to the *Library door* as is their right, the *Founders of the Library*, old and new, *Humfrey, duke of Gloucester*, and *Sir Thomas Bodley*. Between these last and the *Library door*, is a *rain-water pipe*, bearing the date 1618, and the initials (several times repeated) of *T. B. and L. B.* These commemorate the facts that the *building of the Schools* was suggested by *Sir Thomas Bodley*, and that the *treasurer of the subscription* for them was *Sir John Bennet*.

### *Sir Thomas Bodley's Library.*

Let us next go into the middle of the quadrangle, and turn our back on the *Schools Tower*. We have now before us a fine archway, and over it a noble window, set in a panelled ashlar wall. This is, strictly speaking, the *real Bodleian*, *Sir Thomas Bodley's notable addition*, for the accommodation of *books and their readers*, to the old library of the *University*. This fact is set plainly before us in stone. Under a



## 16 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

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DOOR OF PROSCHOLIUM

*To face p. 171*

## THOMAS BODLEY'S LIBRARY 17

pretty piece of tracery, which twines round the coats of arms of the University (p. 3) and of Sir Thomas (p. 44), is a Latin inscription, whose golden utterance may be Englished thus:—

May this thing prosper well!  
Members of Oxford University,  
this library,  
for you, and for the commonwealth  
of scholars,  
Thomas Bodley placed here.

This side of the quadrangle is of two stories only, but involves that curious linking of the library with other scholastic purposes which attaches to the whole range of these buildings. The long upper room is a Library; the lower room, the Proscholium, is a covered walk, provided by Bodley to serve as a cloister which might be paced by students while waiting in wet weather for the opening of their schools. The panelling which adorns the wall owes its exceptional merit to being a close copy of the fifteenth-century work on the eastern end of the Divinity School, some remains of which are still visible within the Proscholium. The Bodleian window and the scroll-work over the Proscholium archway break through this panelling in an abrupt, odd way, as though

## 18 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

the architect had found himself unable to reconcile his door and window designs with the older panelling which he copied.

### *The Proscholium.*

We go forward through the open arch, and find ourselves in a high chamber, with a vaulted stone roof which does credit to Oxford architecture of 1610-2, even if we grant that it was copied from good older work at Bodley's College, Merton. A large unglazed south window gives a glimpse of Exeter College garden and its famous chestnut-tree (p. 6); and brings, when the leaves are green, a welcome flash of colour into this dark, sad place. Facing the open arch is the carved door which gives entrance to the grand Divinity School, the finest building belonging to the University. This door seems to me to have been brought here about 1639, and built into a hole driven through the formerly unpierced east wall of the Divinity School. I imagine that it originally stood at the west end of the School, and was removed when Convocation House was built. The joints where it fits ill into the wall are visible. The admission-fee to view the Divinity School, and the Convocation House beyond, is 3d. Access to the latter is had by a small door in the

western party-wall of the Divinity School. If the attendant is not at hand in the Proscholium, he will be found at the Old Clarendon Building (p. 23).

In the north-west corner is a second doorway, which leads into another quadrangle. But before passing from the Proscholium, we may pause over some of its associations. At the Reformation it was an open space between the Divinity School and the old (1439) Schools of Arts, being in fact the continuation of Schools Street (p. 6). Edward VI's Commissioners (p. 93), when they pillaged the Library, also swept the Schools with the besom of destruction. The Arts Schools fell to ruin, and were turned to mean uses. The Divinity School was desecrated and deserted. In the open space between was held for some time a bi-weekly market for the sale of live pigs. Hence 'the Proscholium' is better known to this day by the ignoble name of 'the Pig-market' than by its honorific Latin title.

Bodley built this arched vault to be a walk for men in the Schools; but, about 1640, when Convocation House was erected in its present place (p. 25), a new use was found for it. The testimony as to a candidate's having fulfilled the requirements for a degree was then almost entirely personal.

## 20 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

Candidates for degrees, therefore, on each of the three occasions on which their grace (i.e. leave to proceed to the degree) was asked in Congregation, had to stand here bare-headed, that any 'Regent' Master of Arts, who chose, might come from Convocation House, by that archway to the right, and see for himself whether any candidate ought to be put back from his degree on the ground of failure in the schools, riotous conduct in the streets, heterodox opinions in religion or politics, debt to tradesmen, or want of due respect to Masters of Arts. Nowadays, all this ceremony is dispensed with, and no testimony as to personal conduct, or as to having fulfilled the statutable requirements, is given beyond the Registrar's brief Latin sentence that all the candidates have satisfied him.

Of late years many schemes have been brought forward for making use of this empty vault, only to be laid aside. At one time, a proposal was made to convert it into a fire-proof room for storing Bodleian books of exceptional value. In 1905 an attempt was made to persuade Convocation to allow it to be used as a bicycle shed; but the Bodleian claimed it, and by a triumphant vote in Convocation, 136 votes against 55, the bicycles were kept out, Nov. 14, 1905.

Nature, according to the old adage, abhors





SHELDONIAN THEATRE

*To face p. 20*



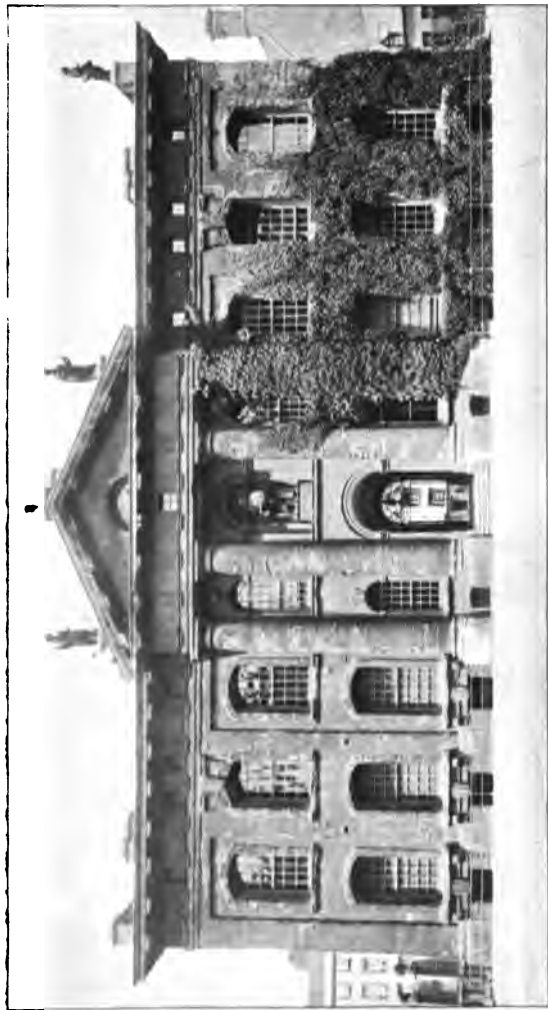
a vacuum. Not so Oxford. The disputants in the Schools, the candidates for degrees, who once frequented the Proscholium, are gone. Gone too are the intruding bicycles. The vault is left empty and unused, except for three humble tenants of forty years' standing, viz., a roller for the gravel of the quadrangle, a very insufficient fire-ladder which by greatest good fortune has not been called on for harder service than that of clipping the creepers on the Old Clarendon Building, and the weather-worn royal arms and supporters taken down from the battlement of the Schools Tower.

*The Theatre Yard.*

Going forward, westwards, through the archway to the right, we come into another quadrangle, called of old the Theatre Yard.

*The Sheldonian Theatre.*

The building on the right is the Sheldonian Theatre. It is in the form of a particularly big D, and presents its straight side to us. It was built in 1664-9, from the designs of Sir Christopher Wren, at the charges of Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury, to accommodate the exultant youth of Oxford at the great summer degree ceremony, which had hitherto desecrated St. Mary's Church



OLD CLARENDON BUILDING

*To face p. 231*


## OLD CLARENDON BUILDING 23

### *The Old Clarendon Building.*

The building to which the Press migrated in 1713, and where it remained till 1830, is the Old Clarendon Building (p. 7), which stands east of the Sheldonian and north of the Schools.

### *The Old Ashmolean Building.*

West of the Sheldonian we see a corner of the Old Ashmolean Building. This was erected in 1679-83 to house the books and curios, antiquarian and natural, given by Elias Ashmole. To this building belongs the distinction of being, at its opening in 1683, the earliest public museum of curiosities in Britain. As first constituted, the Ashmolean housed several departments, which, by reason of immense development, have sought larger quarters elsewhere. In the basement was a chemical laboratory, the first official recognition of natural science in Oxford, and the parent of the cluster of laboratories which now threaten to annex the University Parks. In the upper room was a museum of antiquities and of natural curiosities, from which have gone forth the great archaeological museum in Beaumont Street as well as the anthropological and scientific



## 24 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

branches of the University Museum in the Parks. In small rooms opening out of its staircase were stored the antiquarian books and manuscripts of Elias Ashmole and Anthony Wood, now removed to the Bodleian. On the ground floor was a large lecture-room used by the Oxford Physical Society, which conceived itself to have some claim to be the parent of the Royal Society of London. Now, the Bodleian has annexed the basement to provide shelf-room for its increasing hoards.

### *The Bodleian Furnace.*

South of the Old Ashmolean we have a glimpse of the peaked gable of part of Exeter College. The wall in front of this shows a singular monument-looking structure, surmounted by wasted urns. A whimsical builder sought by this device to provide a suitable background for the Arundel marbles, which long stood here, exposed to the weather. Now it serves to dissemble the presence of a most valuable servant of the library, the furnace which heats the water by which the library is warmed, and without which winter-study would be impossible. In the winter months visitors are often startled at a column of smoke issuing, without apparent reason, from the central urn

## THE BODLEIAN FURNACE 25

of the pseudo-sepulchre, recalling the story, in the *Arabian Nights*, of the smoke which went up from the lovers who perished by fire from heaven in the tomb where they had hid themselves.

### *The Convocation House.*

Next, at the south-west angle of the yard, is a plain building, projecting from the central block, and lying parallel to the Proscholium from which we have just come. This contains, on the ground floor, the meeting-room of the University in its corporate capacity, called Convocation House when the meeting is constituted by all graduates, and Congregation House when it is constituted by graduates resident in Oxford. It is in 'the Ancient House of Congregation' of the University that degrees are conferred. The smaller, outer room, through which we pass into Convocation House, is called the Apodyterium, i. e. unrobing place, from its use as the room in which those who took the degree of Master or Doctor put off the gown of Bachelor to put on the gown of greater dignity. It also serves as the domicile of the Vice-Chancellor's Court, in which members of the University, who are charged with breach of the peace and the like offences, are dealt

## 26 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

with by the Vice-Chancellor as their lawful magistrate. Visitors who have police-court experience will at once recognize here the bench and the dock. The arms over the doorway of the Apodyterium are Sir Thomas Bodley's (p. 44) placed here, somewhat incongruously, because the transference of the Congregation House from St. Mary's Church to this place was largely due to a desire to provide, in a second story, a great western annexe to the Bodleian. The building of this Convocation House destroyed the old western turret-stairs (p. 28) by which access was had to Duke Humfrey's library.

### *Divinity School and Duke Humfrey.*

We have kept to the last much the oldest and much the finest building in the quadrangle. If we cross the quadrangle, and take our stand at the Sheldonian south doorway, we have full in view, between the Proscholium on the east and the Convocation House on the west, the Divinity School (finished 1480), and over it Duke Humfrey's Library.

The Divinity School has five bays, and in each bay a splendid Perpendicular window, with frost-like tracery. The central window has been shamefully marred by thrusting a doorway into it. This was done in





WREN'S DOORWAY

▲  
*To face p. 27]*



1669 to allow the procession of Vice-Chancellor, Doctors, and Proctors, to be formed in the Divinity School for great academical functions, thence to pass, by a short and straight course, into the Sheldonian opposite. The great name of Christopher Wren, the designer of the doorway, is no excuse for the vandalism of unnecessarily destroying a beautiful window and, with it, the whole side of the finest building in Oxford. Had the procession travelled the sixty additional paces needed to carry it through the east door of the Divinity School, and so through the Proscholium, a striking, luminous effect would have been obtained by the emerging of silver mace and scarlet gown from the dark vault into the sunlit quadrangle. Over the ruined window are the University arms, placed here, out of keeping with the old fabric, in 1669.

Duke Humfrey's Library, above, has, in each bay formed by the buttresses, two pointed windows, each of two lights, sombre and somewhat heavily divided by a transom. The imposition of the solid wall of this Library upon the fragile-looking windows of the lower story produces a peculiar crushing-in effect. A parallel, on a small scale, is found at Beeleigh Abbey, near Maldon in Essex, where the wall of the

## 28 THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

dormitory above, pierced only by narrow windows, seems to overweight the graceful wide-arched windows of the refectory below.

The buttresses on this north side are those of the original building, and are two paces deep at their base. In 1700 the weight of the wall-cases in Duke Humfrey was found to be crushing out the south wall. Sir Christopher Wren was consulted in hot haste; and, among other works executed in 1700-2, under his care, to strengthen the building, the southern buttresses were enlarged by the addition of masonry three paces deep, plainly built, without the graceful panelling of the original work which is so conspicuous here. Wren's supports are to be seen in Exeter College Garden, much weather-wasted, and clamouring to be rebuilt.

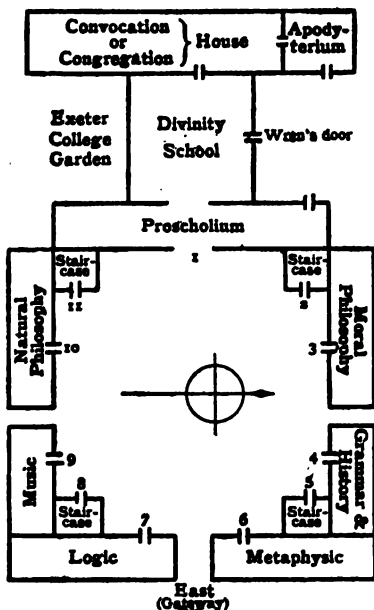
This block of building was sadly dwarfed by the erection, at either end, of the great piles of the Schools and Convocation House. We are fortunately able, from the old drawing by John Bereblock, in 1566, to recover an idea of its stateliness, when in solitary greatness it towered up over mean buildings, an Oxford rival to King's College Chapel, Cambridge. This drawing shows also the western porch (p. 18) of the Divinity School, and the turret-stairs (p. 26) which led up to the Library.

## PLANS OF THE BODLEIAN 29

### *Plans of the Bodleian Buildings.*

We have now ended our view of the great Library from without. The arrangements, as they have been described in our walk about the buildings, may best be explained to the eye, and retained in the memory, by the help of three diagrams. These will also serve to explain our progress, in Chapters II and III, through the interior of the Library and the Picture Gallery.

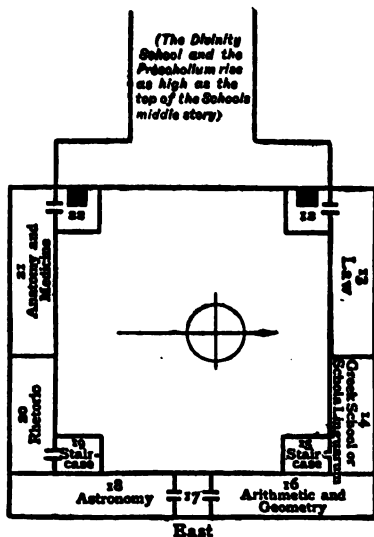
# I. GROUND FLOOR



1. Entrance to Proscholium.
2. Staircase to Law School (over Mor. Phil. School) and back staircase to Bodleian (over Proscholium).
3. *Moral Philosophy School* (now 'the Map room' of Bodleian).
4. *Grammar and History School*, fitted in 1890 to hold books.
5. Staircase to Geometry School (over Metaphysic) and Schola Linguarum (over Grammar and History), now fitted for books.
6. *Metaphysic School* (now 'the Law room', containing

- the law books of Bodleian).
7. *Logic School* (now Pipe Rolla &c.).
8. Staircase to Rhetoric School (over Music School) and Astronomy School (over Logic School). This staircase now contains the Savile Library.
9. *Music School* (now the music collections of Bodleian).
10. *Natural Philosophy School* (now Hope collection of engraved portraits, p. 75).
11. Staircase to Anatomy School (over Nat. Phil. School) and Bodleian (over Proscholium).

## II. MIDDLE STORY



12. Staircase to Law School, and to the Bodleian. The upper part is now 'the Librarian's Upper Study'.

13. *Law School* (now 'Gough room' of Bodleian, containing topographical collections).

14. *Greek School*, called also *Schola Linguarum* (i. e. of Hebrew and Greek), *School of Tongues, Languages School* (now 'Periodical room' of Bodleian).

15. Staircase to Geometry and Languages Schools. The top part now contains the Malone Library.

16. *Arithmetic and Geometry School* (now containing Hebrew and Oriental printed books and MSS.).

17. Savile Library in the Schools Tower, now the Mason room.

18. *Astronomy School* (now the Douce room).

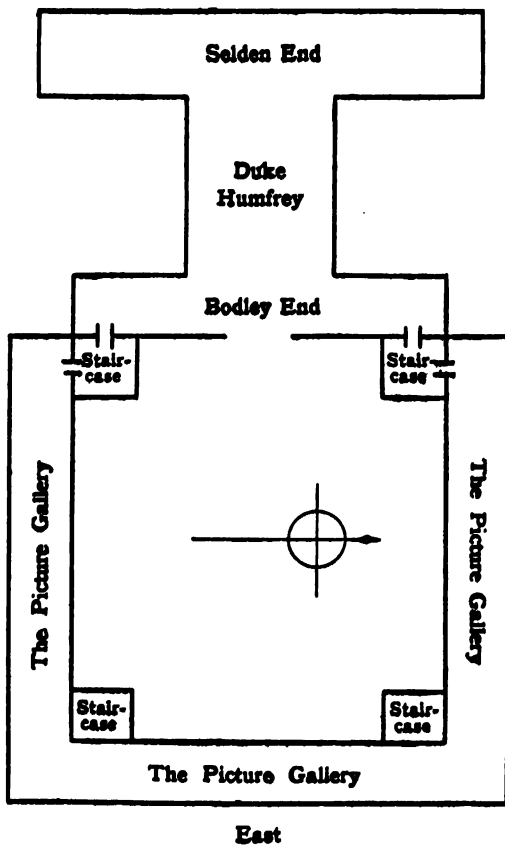
19. Staircase to Rhetoric and Astronomy Schools. The upper part is now 'the Ashmole room', containing Ashmole's and Anthony Wood's books and MSS.

20. *Rhetoric School* (now containing Bodley, Rawlinson, and other MSS.).

21. *Anatomy and Medicine School* (now the 'Auctarium' of the Library).

22. Staircase to Anatomy School, to Picture Gallery (over Anatomy and other Schools), and to the Library.

### III. UPPER STORY



## CHAPTER II

### THE INTERIOR OF THE LIBRARY

HAVING thus viewed what is to be seen outside, we must next make our way within, to complete our survey of the Library. We return, therefore, to the Great Quadrangle of the Schools, where, in the south-west corner, appears a square doorway under the superscription :—

#### BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

##### SCHOLA VETUS MEDICINAE

signifying that it leads to the old School of Medicine (otherwise called, of Anatomy), and to the Bodleian Library.

#### *The Staircase.*

Entering this doorway we find thirteen flights of five steps, sixty-five steps in all, leading upwards. As we ascend, we perceive that the staircase here was an afterthought, built on to the wall of the Library already completed, the panelling of which confronts us at every other flight. As a matter of

## 34 INTERIOR OF THE LIBRARY

fact, the original entrance was, as we have seen (p. 28), at the opposite end of the Library. We perceive also that the designer of this staircase made due provision for the shaky limbs and wheezing breath of aged seekers after knowledge, in the shape of frequent restful seats on window-ledge and in stair-corner. Seven flights, thirty-five steps, bring us to the closed door of the Anatomy School (p. 71); six others, thirty steps, to the threshold of Bodley itself. But before we get there, we are met, at the last flights, by outlanders of the Picture Gallery and the Library. Conspicuous among these are a quaint view of the great monastery of Mount Athos in North Greece, with its monks at their garden and other work, and a large portrait of King George IV. Readers of *The Four Georges* may marvel that the subject of Thackeray's bitter invective should hold place of honour here, as a tutelary genius of this home of learning. But hold it he does; and by the best of titles, as a considerable benefactor to the Library. While Prince Regent, he sent to the Library in 1810 its Herculean papyri and transcripts, of great value for palaeography. In 1816 he gave a large sum of money towards the compilation of a new Catalogue of printed books.



*Sir Thomas Bodley's Library.*

Passing within the silently moving baize door, we find ourselves in a long, rather dark room, being that over the Proscholium (p. 18). Planting ourselves, for a moment, with our backs to the southern window by the door, we look quietly at, and chat over, what is presented to our eyes. We see a long room, with a timbered roof (p. 100) divided into squares. Each square is blazoned with the blue and gold of the arms of the University. Each boss, where four squares touch each other, exhibits the white and black of Sir Thomas Bodley's coat.

The wall space is divided into two portions by galleries, the floors of which present a bright ceiling of alternately red and blue squares, each with five golden stars set saltireways (\*\*\*). Access to the galleries was had by four staircases, recently happily restored. Against the walls, below and above the galleries, books are ranged, folios and quartos below, and octavos above. On the rails of the galleries hang two rows of portraits of benefactors, librarians, and scholars, beginning with Sir Thomas Bodley, first on the left hand. On the floor, in two lines along the walls, run a hard counter and a harder bench. At the corners of


## 36 INTERIOR OF THE LIBRARY

the room are cupboards, with lattice-work doors of metal, painted in the University colours, blue (now faded into black) and gold. These are the 'Archives' of the Library in which were locked books of special value. As we stand here we have one on each hand, 'Arch. A' and 'Arch. B'.

In this room we see the provision made in the seventeenth century for the studies of Oxford men between the day when they took B.A. and the day they proceeded to M.A. No undergraduate could of right pass within the door which brought us here; no B.A. could pass through into the farther part of the library which opens out, on the left, half-way down this room. Every B.A. who entered had to be in full academical dress, i.e. cap, gown, and hood. The books on these shelves were all of the Faculty of Arts. Those under the galleries stood with their backs to the wall, and had their title, or shelf-mark, written in bold black letters on the edge where they opened. To the top of the back, an iron chain was attached, which worked, by a ring, along an iron rod, and was of sufficient length to allow of the book being lifted from the shelf and rested on the counter. A student could thus consult all the volumes by himself, and yet have no chance of smuggling one away under his gown. It

## THOMAS BODLEY'S LIBRARY 37

was not till 1757-61 that these books were unchained. Unfortunately, with the neglect of antiquity so characteristic of that age, no specimens of the old chains were left in place, to make plain to future ages the old library system. Some of the old chains, detached from their books, are exhibited in showcase 21 (p. 40). If a student wished to consult a book in the galleries, or in the 'Archives', he had to ask the Librarian or Sub-librarian to bring it to him. There is, running through the centuries, an under-murmur, a half-expressed grumble, which tells us that the first generations of officers were none too pleased with, and none too ready to serve, students who craved for books which had to be fetched from the galleries. We observe also that the pursuit of knowledge, when the library was founded, was attended with other difficulties. One was the want of light. The room is a dark one at best, and, for most of the winter, the greater part of it is immersed in Cimmerian gloom which makes reading impossible for weak eyes. Further, the room was absolutely without heating apparatus. Not till 1821 was the Library warmed artificially. In the earlier period few were the students who dared to endure the bitter chill of this wintry room, and their visits were naturally hurried.



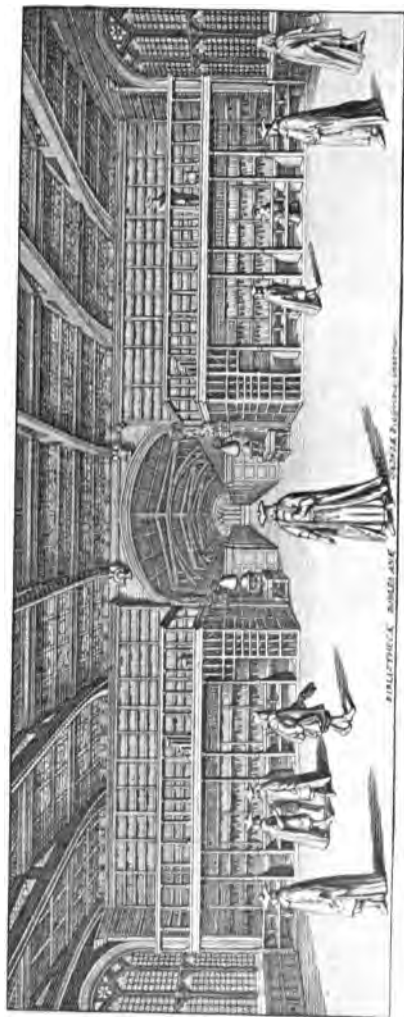
## 38 INTERIOR OF THE LIBRARY

### *The Catalogue of Printed Books.*

From the past, we turn to the present use of the room. In recent years, the counters and seats, both here and in the north end of the room, have been entirely appropriated to the use of the staff, engaged in preparing and revising slips for the catalogues and in other official duties.

The funds of the Library have been far outstripped by its accessions, and so the convenience of a printed catalogue of printed books is impossible. For the Bodleian's million and a half title-pages, and for fully 60,000 new entries each year, there is only a catalogue formed by pasting written slips into folio volumes. Here it runs before us, occupying both sides of the long floor-case in this southern end of the room, overflowing into other cases south and north and west of the Librarian's table in the centre, and filling the space under the eastern window and the shelves right and left of it. Its cubic capacity is fully borne out by the number of its volumes. In March, 1906, I counted these as 792. Their disposition among the letters of the alphabet is singular, and perhaps worth setting down:—





OLD VIEW OF INTERIOR

*To face p. 30*

## CATALOGUE OF PRINTED BOOKS 39

A, 33.	I, 28.	Q, 2.
B, 74.	K, 16.	R, 35.
C, 65.	L, 45.	S, 71.
D, 33.	M, 61.	T, 31.
E, 23.	N, 17.	V, 17.
F, 30.	O, 12.	W, 34.
G, 39.	P, 69.	XYZ, 5.
H, 52.		

The long catalogue case, like an overloaded timber-ship, carries also a sort of deck-cargo, in the shape of a joint index to numerous fractionary catalogues of MSS.

### *The Exhibits.*

We must next visit the north end of the room. It is not an extensive or convenient field for displaying the untold bibliographical treasures of the library ; but it is all there is.

In old views this room has a much brighter and more spacious look. The benches and counters have their gowned students, diligently poring over their books. The floor is clear of cases ; and fine gentlemen, with laced coats, are seen walking about, casting upward eyes on the pictures and the armorial roof. In 1640 a hot Celt and a stubborn Teuton, Thomas Williams and Botho Heinrich, baron

## 40 INTERIOR OF THE LIBRARY

von Eulenburg, found room here to fight out a quarrel with their walking-sticks, a fracas which elicited a Vice-Chancellor's order that no student, English or foreign, might enter the Library carrying staff or other weapon.

It will be found a convenient plan, and one by which oversight and confusion are avoided, to go down the right-hand gangway, under the east wall. We come first to the case marked 21, at the south side of the Librarian's table. This contains some specimens of ancient bindings. Much attention has always been given to the New Testament of date 1625, which displays a crowned David, with harp and dog, embroidered on white satin. This was formerly said to be part of one of King Charles I's waistcoats. The satin may have been: the embroidery must be a later addition. Note that, if any of these show-cases has, for protection from too strong light, a blue cloth over it with the legend 'Undraw and draw over', a little search will discover, under the edge of the case, a brass ring, which can easily be released from its hook to expose the exhibits, and may then be drawn over and rehooked. Each exhibit has a label, clearly written or printed, stating its nature or history.



In the east window, attention should be given to some ancient pieces of glass. One, representing a prelate with a halo round his shaven head, and with his pastoral staff held behind him by an attendant, has been absurdly taken to depict Henry II receiving the homage of William the Lyon, King of Scotland, in York Minster, 1175. Another, more plausibly, professes to represent Henry II's submission to scourging before Thomas Becket's shrine, 1174, in the hope of patching up his quarrel with the church. A third piece proclaims itself 'the Marriage of Henry VI with Margaret of Anjou', 1445, but has the Tudor rose, i. e. the white rose of York enringed by the red rose of Lancaster, and so is presumably 'the Marriage of Henry VII with Elizabeth of York', 1486. The misleading labels to the glass were affixed by the donor, the once well-known Rev. Vaughan Thomas, who died 1858. High up in the window are the royal arms, as borne by Queen Elizabeth, with her motto *Semper eadem*, 'Ever the same,' familiar to all readers of Macaulay's *Armada*.

At the northern end of the Librarian's table is Case 22, with more bindings. Opposite to it is a case with the famous Shelley relics, presented to the Library by Jane, Lady Shelley, in 1893. The curious may find

## 42 INTERIOR OF THE LIBRARY

scope for their ingenuity in trying to trace the imprint of the drowning poet's fingers on the Sophocles which he had in his hand when his boat overturned. Still keeping to the right side of the room, and passing down the gangway, we come to Case 4 containing autographs, including an abbreviated signature which is taken to mark Shakespeare's own copy of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid in an Aldine edition, and Milton's Latin ode to Bodley's Librarian (see p. 110). Case 5, Antiquities and Curiosities of Writing, comes next. It contains three parchment-rolls from Herculaneum, burnt to cinders when the town was overwhelmed by the great eruption of Vesuvius, A.D. 79—a gift from the Prince Regent in 1810. Then come Case 6, Block-books; Cases 7, 8, Early Printing; and Case 9, Old English printed Service Books. Case 10 contains specimens of Greek manuscripts. In Cases 11, 12, 13, under the north window, are manuscripts resplendent with the gold-leaf of 'the gorgeous east'. The window contains some quaint bits of old glass; among them, an horrific surgical plate, *Cruris extirpatio*, 'the cutting off a leg,' 1660. On the west wall of the window hangs a small profile of Napoleon, as First Consul, taken by stealth by the Italian artist Giuseppe

Longhi, while the great captain sat in a brown study during the delivery of a tedious harangue in 1801. Returning southwards, Case 14 presents us with manuscripts of Eastern Christendom. The Western manuscripts extend from Case 15, eleventh to thirteenth centuries, through Cases 16, 17, and 18, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, to Cases 19 and 20, the fifteenth century. This brings us back to the Librarian's table, on which lie two noble folios, with massive covers adorned with silver-gilt bosses and clasps. These are the Registers, which Bodley ordained for registering gifts made to his Library. The first volume (provided by Bodley himself) records gifts from 1600 to 1688; the second, gifts from 1693 to 1791. An enamel on the outer board of the first volume has Sir Thomas Bodley's coat, with the motto over it 'Quarta perennis'. Bodley's arms were, 1 and 4, Bodley, viz. on a white ground, five black martlets, with a red crescent to mark that his was a younger branch of the family, quartering 2 and 3, Hone (his mother's family), viz. on a white ground, two bars wavy between three honestones, all black. When he built the Library, James I granted him an honourable personal 'augmentation' of his paternal coat, viz. on a chief azure the

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three golden crowns of the University arms. At the same time, the apt motto was bestowed *Quarta perennis*, 'the fourth everlasting,' i.e. it will be that eternal crown which rewards a good man's work.



A very little more completes our survey of the contents of this room. In front of the Librarian's table, to the right hand, is the Librarian's study, on the wall of which are portraits of Chaucer, of Gower, and of

Shelley. Beside it are Cases 23, 24, 25, 26, exhibiting a series of manuscripts which display the development of writing, namely, Uncial, Caroline (Continental), Irish, English, continued across the passage by Cases 27, 28, 29, 30, i.e. Lombardic and miscellaneous. Here is the Senior Sub-librarian's study, on the walls of which are portraits of great students, including that strange trio of antiquaries, querulous Anthony Wood, spendthrift John Aubrey, and cantankerous Thomas Hearne, whose biographical and antiquarian collections, preserved in this Library, bring Oxford of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries into clearer literary presentation than Oxford of to-day has yet received. Close by, beside the gallery staircase, are two portraits of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester, copied from contemporary manuscripts.

*Duke Humfrey's Library.*

Turning our backs to the Librarian's table, and looking westwards, we have presented to us the oldest part of the Library, that over the Divinity School (p. 26). First of all, on the right hand, we see on the wall the bronze bust of Charles I, supposed to be by Hubert le Soeur, which was presented to the Library by Archbishop Laud in 1636. For

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the marble 'nest' in which it stands the University, in 1641, paid £6 to an Oxford mason. On the opposite wall is a bust of Sir Thomas Bodley, with a portrait of him beneath it. Next, between two of the 'Archive' cases of the Library, 'Arch. E' and 'Arch. F', is the swing-gate, with the warning:

'Visitors are requested not to pass this gate':

and this history of the room which opens up beyond:—

'Duke Humfrey's Library. This, the oldest part of the building, was founded in 1444 by Humfrey duke of Gloucester, and finished about 1488; to it was removed the University library, which included large gifts from the Duke himself. In 1550 the King's commissioners despoiled it of books, and in 1556 the University disfurnished it. In and after 1598 Sir Thomas Bodley refitted and restocked it, and in 1610-12 he added to it the wing in which you stand.'

From where we stand, at the swing-gate, we can form a good idea of the room as fitted up by Thomas Bodley in 1600. There is the roof which caused him so much trouble (p. 96), blazoned with the arms of the University, and of Bodley. A passage leads between high bookcases, which make a

recess at each two-lighted window in the room. These bookcases had on each side a counter attached, capable of being hooked up, so as to give room in the narrow recess. On this counter the student rested the chained folio which he desired to read. A bench, without back, stood between each pair of cases, so that the seated student might face, indifferently, east or west, as his folio stood on its shelf. After the erection of the Bodley end which we have just surveyed, this older portion of the Library was reserved for 'the higher faculties'. Masters of Arts only, or readers specially enrolled as 'Students in Civil Law', might pass into it. The books remain as they were placed on these shelves in 1612, giving a singular glimpse into the old studies of the University. Going down the south side of the room there are nine cases, all Theology; coming back, on the north side, the cases are, in succession, Theology, one; Jurisprudence, six; Medicine, two. We have to remember, in explanation of this disproportion, that, by statute, almost every Fellow of a College had not only to be in Anglican Orders but was under obligation to proceed to a degree in Divinity. Objection has been taken that more modern books are not placed here. An unanswerable

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retort is to remind the grumbler of the discomfort he would have in his recess, if readable books were on these shelves and readers crushed past him to get at them. This historical part of the Library, though fitted for a show-place, and as such one of the finest in the world, is altogether unfit to remain the chief reading-room of the Library, and funds are urgently needed to make suitable provision for graduate readers elsewhere.

Duke Humfrey, as it stands now, is in one respect more like what it was in Bodley's time than it had been for nearly two centuries. In 1698-4, by the bequest of Thomas Barlow (died 1691), Bishop of Lincoln, and formerly Librarian, the Library received fifty-four volumes of manuscripts and a very large collection of printed books. The folio volumes were placed on the existing shelves, but the quarto and octavo sizes were found to be wholly beyond the capacity of existing shelf-space. To provide for them, a gallery was built over the cases along the south of Duke Humfrey, and shelves put on the wall. A corresponding gallery and shelves, on the north wall, provided for other accessions. In 1877, an alarm was raised that the weight of these side-shelves was crushing out the walls. The books were therefore







DUKE HUMFREY FROM SELDEN END

## DUKE HUMFREY'S LIBRARY 49

removed, and the galleries taken down ; and —it was found that the walls had not budged one inch since they were strengthened, under Sir Christopher Wren's direction, between 1700 and 1702 (p. 28). The original appearance of the room was thus regained. To remove the feeling of bareness caused by the stripping of the walls, traditional portraits of founders of colleges, which had long hung in the Picture Gallery, were brought here, and placed over each window in an obscurity meet for their artistic demerits. It must be remarked, however, that the spaciousness of the passage has been curtailed by the erection, at the end of each case, of shelves to contain bibliographical treatises.

A glance along Duke Humfrey shows that the accommodation for graduates is far inferior now to what it was three hundred years ago. The increase of the staff of the Library has deprived readers of two bays at each end of the room, leaving only six bays open. The increasing work of the useful tribe of copyists blocks up much of the remaining available space. Desk-accommodation is obtained by having both flaps extended in a recess, where only one was contemplated ; and even so, no more than thirty-seven seats are provided for copyists and readers. Worst of all, the light is bad ;



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and there are few hours in winter when it is possible to read a manuscript, even of no special difficulty, in these recesses, though one is lucky enough to get a seat next a window. In summer, you must either catch cold by sitting in a draught to keep you awake, or succumb to the soporific influences of a vitiated atmosphere and the heavy odour of mouldy leather and fermented binders' paste.

One quaint, old-world feature of the original Library has long disappeared. At the swing-gate, which leads from Bodley into Duke Humfrey, there formerly stood two great globes, a terrestrial on the one hand, a celestial on the other. These were, at one time, indispensable in a library. Thomas Hobbes, recalling in 1678, in quaint Latin elegiacs, his studies when he came to Oxford in 1605, mentions his boyish delight in poring over the globes on which were depicted 'the outlines of the earth and of the star-clusters'. Fine examples of these globes are still to be seen in Oriel College Library, a reproach to those libraries which have discarded theirs. Their presence, at this point in the Library, furnished the right place for speeches to distinguished visitors; and of speeches the seventeenth century was greedy beyond our belief. On

## DUKE HUMFREY'S LIBRARY 51

September 28, 1663, Charles II, paying a state visit to the Library, was welcomed, at the globes, by a speech of the Senior Proctor, Nathaniel Crewe of Lincoln College. The favourable impression then made on the King was believed to have smoothed the way for Crewe to the rich see of Durham, to the infamy of servility in high position, and to the glory of a perpetual benefactor to the University, to his College, to the Library, and to his diocese. On September 5, 1687, when James II visited the Library, the then Senior Proctor may have had like hopes from his speech of welcome 'by the globes', but the fates had in store only St. Germain's.

One humble friend of the student goes its way, in slate casings, unsuspected down Duke Humfrey, viz. the hot-water pipe which, as has been said, alone makes Bodley possible in the rigour of an Oxford winter and the cruel fickleness of an Oxford spring. The first attempt at warming was by hot air in 1821. From 1845 onwards experiments were made with other systems of heating by steam. The system now in use dates from 1861.

### *The Selden End.*

Beyond Duke Humfrey, at the further end of the forbidden passage, visitors see a large window. That is one of the win-

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dows of 'the Selden end'. Already, before Sir Thomas Bodley's death in 1618, coming expansion 'cast its shadow before' on the Library; and in his 'evening of life' Bodley saw it, and bequeathed part of his estate towards the building of a western wing, parallel to the Bodley end in which we are standing. This wing is over the Convocation House (pp. 25, 102). It was constructed on the model of the Bodley end, i.e. to have chained folios on the lower shelves, capable of being rested on a counter, in front of a continuous bench for readers. I imagine that the large charge (as money then went) of £13 7s. paid by the University to an Oxford smith in 1646, for 'swivells for the library books' describes the enslaving of folios here. It has, as the Bodley end has, its 'Archives', i.e. locked cupboards for extreme rarities. A gallery, to which access is had by cunningly contrived staircases in Duke Humfrey, runs round it, providing, in old days, shelves on the walls for manuscripts and smaller-sized books, removed from the tender mercy of readers. Here were placed, as a gilt inscription long proclaimed, the unrivalled collections of manuscripts which make the name of the donor, William Laud, dear to all who love Oxford and learning, and obtain from them for-

givenness of much that they find hard to pardon in his statecraft.

As at first built, the Selden end was a noble, bright room. It had a north and a south window, and three windows to the west. Later, that horrible call for shelf-space, which has been the bane of the Bodleian, darkened the room by blocking two of the west windows. In modern times, the demand for reference-books, classical, theological, historical, has cumbered the floor with labyrinths of bookcases. The Selden end provides on its floor only twenty seats for readers, and of these only eight are really serviceable for readers working at difficult manuscripts.

Objects of interest in the Selden end are few. In the western window, which faces us, are some fragments of old glass. On its side-walls are, to the left, wofully mutilated, the unique copy of Ralph Agas's prospect of Oxford, with verses which leave it doubtful whether it is of date 1578 or 1588; to the right, John Hamond's prospect of Cambridge in 1592. Over the Cambridge map hangs Selden's hatchment. On his father's side Selden laid no claim to coat-armour. The arms on the hatchment are those of his mother (Baker), who claimed gentility, but their poor heraldry shows the

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gentility to be of late growth. The field is blue, and is crossed by a gold fesse, which bears three red cinquefoils, and parts three gold swan's-heads erased with red ducal coronets on their necks. A fine portrait of Selden, as a young man, with the sweet face which captivated the wealthy Countess Dowager of Kent and made his fortune by a secret marriage with her, hangs beside the entrance from Duke Humfrey.

On the floor of the Selden end, directly in front of the west window, supported by a frame, and swung on a wheel, is 'Sir Thomas Bodley's bell'. This bell, cast by William Yare of Reading, was provided by the Founder, to hang outside the Library, to give notice, at 8 a.m., that the Library was open for readers and also to ring the hour of closing. Round it, in gold letters, runs the legend 'Sir Thomas Bodeley gave this bell 1611'. Lost sight of for many years, it was discovered under a staircase in 1866. Its loud note now proclaims the opening of the Library at 9 a.m., and warns readers to shut their books, collect their papers, and depart at the closing hour. When the Selden end was open to visitors, this bell had for them an irresistible temptation. Drawn by necessity, they used to put their hands on the wheel, and, before they knew



what they were doing, untimely thunder forth the sonorous note of closing, in the midst of the long summer afternoon.

*Dimensions of the Library.*

A. Bodley end, 89 feet long,  $20\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide,  $23\frac{1}{2}$  feet high.

B. Duke Humfrey,  $90\frac{1}{2}$  feet long,  $31\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide,  $22\frac{1}{2}$  feet high.

C. Selden end, 88 feet long, 28 feet wide.

The full length of the vista from the east window to the west is thus 130 feet.

See the diagram on p. 32.

*Mementoes of the Library.*

In passing out of the Library, the visitor may pause once more at the window by the door. On the side-walls of this window are some interior views of the Library at different dates. The sill contains working-lists of the chief recent accessions in various branches of literature. There is also a large folio volume, which the visitor would do well to peruse. It is an album of photographs of the Library buildings, of the Shelley portraits and relics, of some autographs and some bindings, of certain famous manuscripts and early printed books, of portraits of the Founder and chief benefactors. A glance over its pages will help to fix in the memory many of the

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principal points mentioned in this and the preceding chapter. The photos are on sale in the Library, and the book contains notices of the price of each and the way to get them. In choosing pictures for this Guide, care has been taken not to trench upon these Library plates.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PICTURE GALLERY

FROM the staircase-landing, in front of the Bodleian door, a short flight of thirteen steps leads up into the Picture Gallery.

As in the Bodleian itself, visitors will do well, if, immediately on entering, they stop for a few moments with this Guide, and have a chat as to what they are to see, and how to see it.

This Picture Gallery is the third story of the 1619 Schools. When these Schools had been projected as a structure of two stories, the brilliant suggestion was made that a third story might be added, to contain pictures and such other treasures of the University as could best be exhibited on walls. Accordingly, by a subscription (to which Sir Thomas Bodley contributed in his will), the University raised enough money, about £8,000, to make the addition, and so secured this splendid covered walk.

In the days when Bodley was without heating (p. 51), it must have been a comfort to

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readers in the cheerless reading-room to come out here, and restore circulation by a brisk walk along the resounding floor. Here also there is no injunction commanding religious silence, and friends may communicate their thoughts to each other in the natural voice, and not in whispers. Here, therefore, Bodleian readers, in groups of two or three, may from time to time be seen, pacing up and down in animated talk.

Here were placed many of the treasures of the University, artistic or curious ; but several of these old exhibits have now gone, for no sufficient reason, to other University treasure-houses. Guy Fawkes's lantern, for example, given, in 1641, by the son of one of the Justices of the Peace engaged in Guy's arrest, has, since 1887, been placed in the New Ashmolean Museum in Beaumont Street, where, after careful and repeated search among the cases, I have never been able to find it. It ought certainly to be brought back here, to its known window-sill. It might justly be claimed as a Bodleian historical MS., because of the inscription on it. As I last saw it in this gallery, shattered by the touch of inquisitive generations rashly allowed of old to handle it, it was certainly more of a MS. than of a lantern. Sir Joshua Reynolds's 'James Paine (the

architect) and his son ' now sheds its lustre from the wall of the University Galleries, whither, in 1847, were removed all paintings which were not portraits. From a Bodleian point of view, it is difficult to see why, when portraits were to be left here, that glorious portrait was removed. But enough remains of interest and value to make a visit here a pleasant and abiding memory.

Looking down the room, we see that the exhibits are arranged in three rows. There is the right-hand, or south, wall, with curiosities in cases in its window-sills, and portraits on its walls. There is, in the centre of the floor, a long line of objects, chiefly portrait-busts, and architectural models. There is the left-hand, or north, wall, with window-sills and pictures. The window-exhibits are protected from the sun by blue covers, which are secured by two curtain-rings on hooks. These can readily be found and, if you equally use both hands, the cases unveiled. Forget not also, as you look at the window-exhibits, to look out on the buildings without.

This suite of rooms has not escaped the deformation which storage and other necessities, co-operating with bad taste, have brought on everything in the building. The beautiful oak roof, panelled and quaintly

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carved, was destroyed in 1881 in a baseless panic, to be replaced by the present plaster ceiling, altogether unworthy of the room. The Library has seized on the walls, and its bookcases not only 'sky' the pictures, but block most of the windows, whereby, in Anthony Wood's phrase, 'the majestick light of the roome is lost.' A part of the third arm of the Gallery has been cut off to provide an additional room for Bodley. Is it still open to hope that the University will one day awake to appreciation of this noble *ambulacrum* and restore it to its pristine splendour?

### *Method of seeing the Gallery.*

The following course enables visitors to see all the exhibits with equal comfort and certainty. First of all, take a step or two forward into the middle of the room, and inspect personal relics of three great men.

Sir Thomas Bodley provided his Library with an iron chest to contain its reserve of coin, as was necessary in the ages before banks. Three things are to be noted about this chest:—(1) the elaborate arrangement of locks, guarding it (according to the traditional arrangement) by three keys, each in separate custody, in happy ignorance of the

## METHOD OF SEEING GALLERY 61

modern safe-breaker whose chisel would soon pierce the thin bottom of the chest; (2) the beautiful painted work of the exterior, exhibiting, among other devices, the arms of the University and of Bodley; (3) on the front, on the open book of the University shield, the motto *Sapientiae et Felicitatis* (the book 'of wisdom and happiness', an allusion perhaps to Proverbs iii. 13), not *Dominus illuminatio mea* as elsewhere (p. 4), showing that the University motto was still uncertain. On July 11, 1642, when Charles I was raising a loan, promising 8 per cent. interest, in prospect of the Civil War, he got out of this chest £500 of Library money. This sum was yearly entered in the Library accounts, as a debt due by the Crown, down to 1782. What it would now amount to, principal and interest, if the royal house of Stuart were in a position to redeem its promise, would make a neat sum for Responsions Arithmetic paper. Close by the chest, a bust, in vivid colours, gives a 'counterfeit presentment' of the Founder's person.

A little beyond is the writing-cabinet, with its furnishing, such as quill pens, scissors, wafers, of Edward Hyde, first earl of Clarendon, Charles II's Lord Chancellor, author of

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the famous *History*. It came to the Library in 1851, from the Trustees, to whom it had been given, in 1753, by the earl's great-grandchildren.

Still further along is a monument of international comity—the guitar sent by Shelley, with a copy of verses, to Mrs. Jane Williams, wife of that Edward Ellerker Williams who was drowned with the poet. This was given in 1898 by Edward Augustus Silsbee, of Salem, Massachusetts. A portrait of the donor, by John Singer Sargent, R.A., hangs in the window hard by.

Returning to the wall by the door, notice may be taken, first of all, of the pictures. These (and the others in the gallery), thanks to repairs effected by means of a recent subscription, are now in good state. They are all carefully labelled, so that visitors, as they pass them, can have no doubt as to their identity. Hence, except in very special cases, nothing is said about them in this Guide.

Next, there is one object by this wall which demands special attention—the chair made out of the timbers of Sir Francis Drake's ship *The Golden Hind*, in which he sailed round the world, 1577-80. It came to the Library in 1662, by the gift of the King's Storekeeper at Deptford. On it is a shield-



## METHOD OF SEEING GALLERY 63

shaped silver plate, with half-obliterated verses by Abraham Cowley, beginning:—

To this great Ship which round the Globe  
has run,  
And matcht in Race the Chariot of the Sun.

A modernized copy of the verses is on the wall hard by. Of so-called historical relics few are so well attested.

Thereafter, we may proceed straight forward, by the right hand, along the outward, or, here, the south, wall of the gallery, returning by the other side, and taking the mid-floor exhibits on the return journey by the poorer interior wall.

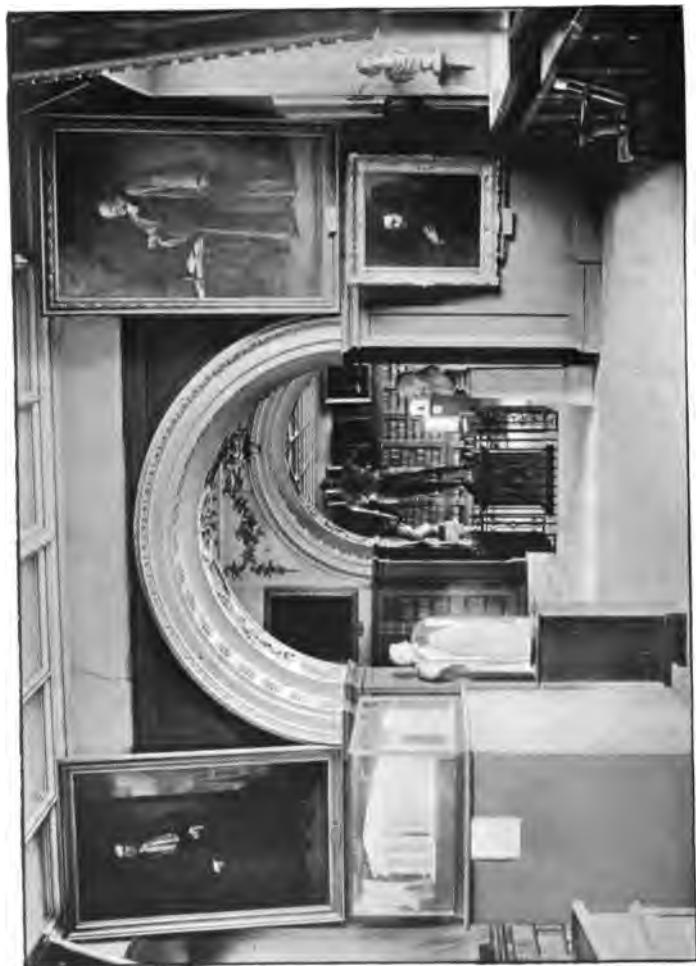
Our first stage, from the south-west corner to the south-east, takes us past seven windows, through which we get, in succession, fine views of Heber's chestnut-tree (p. 6) with Brasenose College, of the Radcliffe Camera with St. Mary's, and of the fretted pinnacles of All Souls College. Just beside the seventh window, visitors should look for two oval miniatures, which deserve special notice, not merely as portraits but because of their curious history. They are portraits, by Clément-Louis-Marie-Anne Belle, of the son and daughter-in-law of James II, bequeathed by our great non-juring benefactor, Dr. Richard Rawlinson, before 1755, Long

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kept, for political reasons, in obscurity, they were at last, about 1870, placed on these walls with the labels—James Stuart, the Pretender—and—Maria Clementina, wife of the Pretender. In 1876 there came to Oxford, as an undergraduate, the descendant of one of Prince Charlie's comrades in arms in the '45. Soon afterwards it was found that a few swift scratches had erased the obnoxious epithet on both frames. Recently, the words have been restored, but with inverted commas on one of the frames to deprecate Jacobite wrath, by suggesting that 'Pretender' is to be taken in a historico-legal, and not in an offensive, Hanoverian, sense. The marks of this odd passage of arms are still visible on both frames.

Our second flight takes us from the south-east corner to the north-east, along a wall of which only five windows are now open. It begins at a trio of portraits which commemorate, disjointedly, (1) the visit of the Allied Sovereigns to Oxford in 1814, and (2) the installation of 'the chief of Waterloo' as Chancellor of the University, June 9, 1834. Wellington, it may be noted, is in the black and gold robes of the Chancellor of Oxford University; and this is the latest portrait for which he 'sat'. As a portrait, one fault may be noted, viz. that the painter has dis-





TOWER CHAMBER AND PEMBROKE STATUE

## METHOD OF SEEING GALLERY 65

guised the singularly small stature of the man, a common feature of great captains. It is not the least of the merits of the portrait of Dean Stanley, which is seen on our return journey, that the artist has truthfully suggested the tininess of the frame which lodged a great soul. Through the windows, as we pass along, we have fine groupings (1) of Hertford College with the fretted pinnacles of New College, (2) of Hertford new buildings with New College great bell-tower. At the second window is the finest work of art in the gallery, Vandyke's Sir Kenelm Digby (d. 1665), soldier, chemist, mystic, man of letters, benefactor of the Bodleian. It was given to the University in 1780.

In the central chamber which marks the passage of the Gallery through the Schools Tower (p. 8), pay attention to the fine bits of old glass. These came by the gift of William Fletcher, Alderman of Oxford, in 1797. They represent the spoils of churches and of old mansions of the gentry round Oxford. Above all, notice the bronze statue in Jacobean armour, in the centre of the chamber. This was cast by Hubert le Soeur, after a portrait by Rubens, and would make the reputation of any sculptor. It is the figure of

## 66 THE PICTURE GALLERY

William Herbert, third earl of Pembroke, Chancellor of Oxford (p. 12), one of 'the incomparable brothers' to whom the publishers of the 1623 first folio (p. 115) of Shakespeare dedicated their venture. To this a most singular history, or perhaps legend, attaches. Two Oxford men, in 1723, were on a visit to the earl's great-nephew, Thomas, seventh earl of Pembroke, in his noble mansion, Wilton House. While he was showing them his art treasures, they gracefully recalled his hereditary connexion with the University, and regretted that the University had no fitting memorial of its munificent Chancellor. To their astonishment and delight the earl offered to send to Oxford this noble statue. The head, it so happened, could be lifted out of the shoulders, having been cast separately to allow of its being placed just at the angle which would best suit the light of the room for which it was intended. In fear that their host might repent his promise, as James I did (p. 98), the Oxonians next morning set off, carrying the head at saddle-bow, like triumphant Tartar horsemen, leaving the trunk (which weighs 1,100 lb.) to follow by carrier.

Just beyond the tower-passage is a most truculent portrait of the great Elizabethan

## METHOD OF SEEING GALLERY 67

seaman, Martin Frobisher (d. 1594), given to the University in 1674. He is obviously a man ready either to fight 'that great fleet invincible', or to be 'the first who ever burst' into the frozen Arctic sea.

This second flight ends at a case containing the embroidered pall used when the University said mass for Henry VII. Visitors will note the royal arms, as then blazoned (viz. France and England quarterly, with, for supporters, the silver greyhound of Beaufort and the red dragon of Wales), and the Tudor badges (the portcullis and the double rose).

Our third flight leads along what is now a dreary blank wall, from the north-east corner to where the Bodleian has annexed part of the Gallery (p. 60). The windows are all blocked by bookcases, and the line of portraits is distressingly 'skied'. The central picture on the short west wall is a famous likeness of Elizabeth's chief statesman, William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, mounted on his mule.

Commencing our return passage by the interior wall, our fourth flight takes us past four remaining windows, through which we view, in succession, the front of Bodley's Library, the pinnacles and gleaming copper roof of the Schools with the soaring Radcliffe

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dome beyond, and the Tower of the Five Orders (p. 7), the upper carvings of which can now be distinctly seen.

Our fifth flight takes us from the north-east corner, through the Tower chamber, to the south-east corner. Through two unblocked windows we look on the Bodleian proper (pp. 16, 35), with the needle-like spire of Exeter College beyond. This wall of the Gallery is pre-eminently the quarter of the Stuarts. On the first door we see Flora Macdonald, the preserver of Prince Charlie, depicted, with features of a marked Scottish type, in the glow of her tartan plaid, by the cunning fingers of Allan Ramsay in 1749. Beside the first window is a remarkable cluster of three generations of the Stuarts:—James I, his sons Prince Henry and Charles I, and Charles II, an impudent-lipped, black-avised boy. Beyond, on a second door, is a picture which is famous because of its strange history. It was given to the University in 1806 by Alderman William Fletcher (p. 65), as a reputed portrait of Mary, Queen of Scots. In 1838 it was sent to London, to be cleaned under the direction of Sir David Wilkie. The workman drew Wilkie's attention to the singular fact that the portrait was painted *over another*. Since this outer portrait had been engraved, and was of a type







THE MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS, PORTRAIT

*To face p. 69]*

## METHOD OF SEEING GALLERY 69

commonly associated with the Queen, Wilkie advised that copies of it should be taken (viz. those which now hang just over and under the picture), and that the surface portrait should then be removed to lay bare the original painting. There was brought to light this sad picture, in which wasted features seem to tell of years of captivity, and pleading eyes suggest the heart-sickness which comes from hope deferred. The painting is clearly left unfinished. Why so? and why painted over? Some have inferred that, when the unhappy Mary saw the wrecks of her beauty mirrored on the artist's panel, she shivered, and ordered him to hide the too painful reality beneath a fancy likeness which presented her not as she was, a time-wasted, dethroned prisoner, but as she had been when still young, still free, and still a queen. Others have stoutly argued that it is a picture by a Flemish artist, and that its label ought to be 'Unknown Lady of the XVIth Century!'

The sixth and last lap of our course carries us from the south-east to the south-west corner. Here, two unblocked windows give a view of the north side of the Schools, with the cupola of the Sheldonian beyond.

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And so we come to good-bye to the Gallery. The measurements are:—

South side,  $129\frac{1}{2}$  feet long, by  $24\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide.

East side,  $158\frac{1}{2}$  feet long, by 24 feet wide.

North side,  $129\frac{1}{2}$  feet long (but a room, p. 60, has been cut off), by  $24\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide.

See the diagram on p. 32.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANNEXES, OLD AND NEW

#### *The Anatomy School.*

As we descend the staircase from the Bodleian, we pass, at the landing (p. 34) between the seventh and eighth flights, a closed door. This is the entrance to the 'Old' School of Medicine, otherwise called the Anatomy School. This room was set aside, at the building of the Schools, for the lectures and demonstrations of the Regius Professor of Medicine, and the disputations of students in that Faculty. The epithet 'Old' was prefixed when the Professor of Medicine migrated (about 1794) to the Rhetoric School in the south-east corner of the quadrangle.

Almost from the first, this School housed a collection of curiosities, many of which had no relation to medical studies. The janitor of the Bodleian had the custody of this collection, and the tips for showing it to visitors formed a welcome addition to his

miserable stipend. It became so thoroughly identified with the Library as to be known, all through the eighteenth century, as 'the Bodleian Repository'. In 1631 a Frenchman, in his account of his travels, records that, in the Medical School at Oxford, he saw a serpent 10 feet long from the East Indies, a branch of coral from the Red Sea, and an entire human skin. In 1658 Anthony Wood's diary tells us that the fame of the Anatomy School as a show-place rivalled that of the Bodleian itself. In 1663 a French traveller was shown in a case here a many-coloured cotton robe from the East, but his Diary expresses no thankfulness for the information given him that it was 'Joseph's coat'. The robe was an old possession, redyed; and, under another name, had had a long and singular history. An envoy, sent into Muscovy by Queen Elizabeth at the beginning of her reign, heard there a curious fable about the cotton plant, viz. that the nomad tribes, on the east of Russia, clothed themselves in the skins of a strange creature, 'the Tartar lamb,' half vegetable, half animal. Learning that one of the Czar's gowns was made of such a 'Tartar lambskin', he begged it from him and obtained it as a leave-taking present. The gown at last came to Oxford,

where it was received in 1615. When Charles II sauntered over the building, Tuesday, March 15, 1681, while in Oxford for the famous one-week Parliament (p. 11), he went 'into the Anatomy School, where many incomparable curiosities he viewed'. In the eighteenth century the vitriolic diary of Thomas Hearne gives us a direct insight into the trivialities of the collection and the petty malice of party feeling in Oxford. On February 20, 1712-3, Hearne, as janitor of the Bodleian, showed an Oxford Professor and an Irish gentleman over the Anatomy School. For their entertainment he delivered a grotesque rigmarole about an oak tobacco-stopper in the collection, to the effect that when Charles II was hiding in the Royal Oak from Cromwell's Ironsides, he wiled away the time by filling his waistcoat pocket with acorns. One of these he carried with him throughout his exile, and at the glorious restoration planted it in St. James's Park. There it grew into a tree, which the Duke of Marlborough, base Whig! cut down to clear the site for Marlborough House. A loyal, pious, and (need it be added) truthful divine had this tobacco-stopper made out of the timber, and sent it to Oxford. Continuing his janitorial 'patter', Hearne went on to make vile

## 74 ANNEXES, OLD AND NEW

charges against the wife of a Whig divine, and exhibited, without naming him but with many encomiums of his virtues, the picture of 'the King over the water'. The Professor passed all this over with the jesting remark, 'In Oxford we are all rebels.' His companion, of bitterer mood, delated Hearne to the Vice-Chancellor, who deprived Hearne of the custody of the room. Hearne's subsequent departure from the Library, as a non-juror, was a great misfortune to it, for, with all his sweltered venom, personal and political, he had brought to its service unwearied diligence, genuine love of books, and varied learning, in a measure seldom equalled and still more rarely surpassed in its history.


In 1789 the Library began blocking the inner windows of this room with bookcases. In 1794 the room was renamed the *Auctarium*—the room which 'increased' the Library. In 1805 the Bodleian obtained sole possession of it, and its curios migrated, unvalued and untraced. So devoid of historic feeling was Georgian Oxford, that it never dreamed that the 'Tartar lamb' robe of Ivan the Terrible (d. 1584), tattered but authentic, was a relic of unparalleled interest.



## HOPE ENGRAVED PORTRAITS 75

### *Hope Engraved Portraits.*

Descending into the Great Quadrangle, we find, next to the Bodleian entrance on the right, under the title 'Schola Naturalis Philosophiae', a door bearing an inscription which runs: 'Hope Collection of Engraved Portraits and Books,' with the information that throughout the year, between 11 and 1 on Saturdays, and 11 and 1, and 2 and 4, on other weekdays (with a short vacation in August and a few days at Easter), a call by the knocker will obtain admission. This room houses the magnificent collection of engraved portraits and fine art books given to the University by the Rev. Frederick William Hope, D.C.L., in 1861, with its accessions. The collection now comprises some 250,000 portraits, besides other prints. The catalogue is not yet completed, but even now an inquirer can generally be directed to the likenesses of any famous man he is interested in. In addition to the portfolios of prints there are more than 4,000 volumes of richly illustrated works, with books of reference on art subjects. The Collection, technically, is not part of the Bodleian, but has its own Keeper. It is, however, here mentioned as being housed in the same building.



## 76 ANNEXES, OLD AND NEW

Admission is free of charge, visitors merely entering their names in a book. The room is not spacious, being necessarily crowded by cases; and, except for special inquiries, ought not to be used. In any case, only a small party of visitors should seek admission.

### *The Radcliffe Camera.*

Passing out of the Schools quadrangle by the archway through which we entered it, we have in front of us, enclosed in a heavy iron railing, between the 1619 Schools and St. Mary's Church, a striking building. A sixteen-sided ground story, 100 feet in diameter, bears up a pillared circular room, which in its turn supports a far-seen dome, crowned with a cupola soaring to a height of 140 feet. This was erected, 1737-49, from the plans of James Gibbs, at the cost of, and for the use of, the Radcliffe Trustees.

To provide the site for this building, with its girdle of turf, and to widen the streets next it, three streets, the meanest and most crowded, but at the same time the oldest and most interesting in Oxford, were swept away. On the east, the west side of Cat Street, with its memories of mediaeval bookbinders and like trades (p. 1), vanished; on the west, the east side of

## THE RADCLIFFE CAMERA 77

Schools Street, redolent of ancient disputations (p. 6); and, on the south, the lane along St. Mary's churchyard, an ancient string of academic 'halls' and 'schools'—i. e. the living-houses and lecture-rooms of mediaeval Oxford. In sweeping all these away, Georgian Oxford showed as great disregard for antiquity looking backward, as lack of foresight in realizing what would be the value of building-space in the centre of academic life.

John Radcliffe, abandoning in 1677 his fellowship at Lincoln College and the necessity of taking Holy Orders, followed the practice of medicine, and, in spite of his brusque and even brutal manners, acquired great reputation and a lucrative London practice. At his death in 1714 he bequeathed part of his large fortune to Trustees for the furtherance of learning in Oxford, including the building of a library. The ground story of this building, with arches open to all the winds of heaven, supplied a drill-hall for the University volunteers. The books were stored in the upper story and its gallery. These books were at first intended to be 'the most modern in all faculties and languages, not in the Bodleian Library', and, from the first, included Oriental MSS., but, in 1811, the Radcliffe Library was

## 78 ANNEXES, OLD AND NEW

specialized for medicine and natural history. On the erection of the University Museum in the Parks, it was felt that this scientific library should accompany the natural science departments, and in 1861 the books were removed hence to a new home at the Museum. In 1901 the Drapers' Company of London presented to the University a large range of buildings, on the south side of the Museum grounds, to house the library, now containing over 60,000 volumes.

In 1860 the Radcliffe Trustees offered their spacious rotunda to the Bodleian for storage of books and accommodation of readers. These purposes it has served since 1862 under its new name of 'the Camera'. The arches of the ground story have been glazed, and its floor now supplies large shelf-accommodation for the Library.

### *Interior of the Camera.*

The Camera is open to readers from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. almost every weekday in the year. It is accessible to visitors by a fee of 3d. each.

Two flights, each of seven steps, bring us to the outer door. Thence a circular stone staircase in three flights—thirteen steps, twelve steps, and twelve steps—leads up





## INTERIOR OF THE CAMERA 79

to the inner door. On the left-hand side of this hangs 'The Oxford Almanack' for the year. This is a sheet almanac, which exhibits every year an engraved view of some Oxford building. The series began in 1674, and its successive issues are of the greatest value for the history of Oxford architecture. On the right hand of the door is a small bust of James Gibbs (p. 76).

Passing within, we find ourselves in a spacious, well-lighted room, under a high-arching dome, with a gallery running right round. Under the gallery are forty-eight desks for readers; in it, thirty desks, to which access is had by circular stairs behind the Superintendent's desk. Over the entrance doorway is a statue of Radcliffe (p. 77), in wig and gown. On the floor, in front, are four large cases with a duplicate copy of the Bodleian Catalogue of printed books (p. 38). Exactly opposite the entrance, over the Superintendent's desk, hangs a portrait of Radcliffe by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

### *View from the Roof.*

The roof is reached by a narrow staircase, to the left of the entrance as we came in, past a picture of John Shute Duncan (d. 1844), an enthusiast in Oxford archaeology.



Thirteen stone steps lead to an old entrance by five steps to the gallery of the rotunda. From this landing, fifty-seven stone steps, narrow, and not too well lighted, carry us, through a low doorway, on to the leads. Before we pass through, let us be sure to secure well our head-gear, for, if any breeze is stirring in Oxford, here it will be felt as a gale. We have reached a height of 100 feet from the pavement; and a circular platform, of 510 feet round, subjects all Oxford to our view. The following are the chief buildings which lie before us, as we go orderly round.

First of all, looking northwards, past the shoulder of the low doorway, we see in the foreground the pale sea-green copper roofs of the Schools quadrangle (p. 12), surmounted to the left by the triangular face and the cupola of the Sheldonian (p. 21), and to the right by the Schools tower (p. 7). In the distance we see the great mass of Keble Chapel dominating the other long roofs of that College. To the west of these is the spire of St. Philip and St. James's Church. To the east is seen the château-like tower of the University Museum with the new Radcliffe Library at its foot (p. 78). We go forward a step or two, to find the line of Hertford College old and new buildings leading the eye north-east to Mansfield and



Manchester Colleges. A few more steps, and we have to the east, in All Souls College, the pinnacles of the Codrington Library, and, in New College, the grey roof of the cloisters, the great tower, the upheaved wave of the chapel and hall roofs, and, further on, its most recent buildings, with green hills beyond. Standing by the gangway which leads past the first buttress, we look east on All Souls cloister-quadrangle with its telescoped towers. Between these, peeps the square tower of St. Peter's in the East, with Headington Hill beyond. The chapel and hall, in one continuous ridge, and the south side of New College old quadrangle show themselves on the left; on the right rises the central cupola of Queen's College. Standing on the gangway itself, and looking back northwards, along Cat Street, we are faced by Hertford College newest buildings, over which appear the graceful lanterns of Wadham College.

Going forward to the second vase-shaped ornament we look down, on the south-east, on All Souls pinnaced chapel and hall; and, beyond these, on the long west side of Queen's College, continued, across High Street, by the weathercock and the vast roofs of the New Schools quadrangle. Notice how characteristic a feature in Oxford

roofs is the grey 'Stonesfield slate', a fissile stone of the neighbourhood, which Oxford architects of all centuries have regarded as the ideal covering for their achievements. Over Queen's College, low down against a fringe of trees, peep the pinnacles of Magdalen College 'Founder's tower.' The Wolsey tower of the same College, the tower of the May-morning service, soars up, plain to be seen.

Crossing a second buttress, and looking between the first pair of vases, we catch glimpses of All Souls old quadrangle, and of the three quadrangles of University College. Two steps further carry us to face full south, and enable us to judge of the architect's skill who grouped 'St. Mary's clusters' round St. Mary's spire. Further south, behind the graceful, pinnacled tower and high-heaved roof of Merton College chapel, we see the topmost branches of the old elms of Christ Church Broad Walk, and the blue haze which broods over the Thames.

Going on into the third section of the platform, and looking south-west, we see, past St. Mary's tower, the spacious site of Christ Church, marked out by the crow-steps of the Meadow tower, the spire of the cathedral, the four-turreted belfry tower, the pinnacles of the hall (overtopping the heavy

mass of Peckwater quadrangle), and Wren's Tom tower. Beyond, lie the Berkshire hills, whence pedestrians, on winter evenings, looking Oxford-wards, like Matthew Arnold's scholar gipsy, see, and feel the fascination of,

The line of festal light in Christ Church Hall.

Going forward to the next gangway, we look down on the chapel and High Street tower of Brasenose.

In the next segment we have in sequence Brasenose new quadrangle, All Saints' graceful pilastered spire set on its square base, and the soaring roofs of the Municipal Buildings. On the left of these last is St. Aldate's spire; and on the right, the square tower and pepper-box of St. Martin's (Carfax). Beyond swell the hills behind Hincksey—

Runs it not here, the path by Childswell farm?

At the next buttress, we look west, over Brasenose old quadrangle, to Lincoln College, where we note the red-tiled roofs of its 'Grove', the few remaining trees which explain the name of that building, the louvre (the fifteenth-century smoke-hole) of its hall, and its entrance tower. Further off, are seen the square tower and pepper-box of St. Peter le Bailey Church (fringed by the trees

## 84 ANNEXES, OLD AND NEW

which grow on the pre-Norman earth-mound of the Castle), and the spire of the Wesley Memorial Church. Facing north-west, we have, on our left, the great roof of Exeter College hall, to the left; in the centre, the garden façade of that College; and to the right, its soaring chapel (copied from the Sainte Chapelle, Paris), with far-seen needle-like spire. Further off, on the left, is the square tower (Norman, or even Saxon) of St. Michael's Church by the north gate of Oxford. At our feet, the south-west corner of Brasenose old quadrangle leads on to the east window and sharp-pitched roof of Lincoln College chapel.

Standing beside the ventilator, and looking straight over Brasenose College gateway, we see in the far west, past the shoulder of some high buildings, the battered top of a dark, gloomy tower. That is the donjon of the Castle, the great tower built when the Norman set his armed heel on Saxon Oxford.

Just past the useful but unornamental chimney-shaft, we have a varied group. Exeter College garden, with Heber's chestnut-tree (p. 6); the roof of Duke Humfrey (p. 26); the Sheldonian triangle and cupola; and the pinnaced Selden end (p. 101), continued westwards by Exeter College library. Past Exeter College spire are seen the

## VIEW FROM THE ROOF 85

Broad Street tower and the variegated Chapel spire of Balliol College. Over the Selden end is seen the upheaved roof of Balliol College hall; and over Duke Humfrey, the roofs of Trinity College new buildings, and the sugar-caster bell-turret of St. Aloysius, the Roman Catholic church of Oxford.

The last segment of the roof-walk faces due north. Right in front are the copper roofs of the Schools. Far to the left, we perceive the squat tower of St. Giles and the long ridge of St. Aloysius's roof, over which peer the meteorological instruments on the tower of the Radcliffe Observatory (p. 8). Straight north is seen the ridge of Keble College hall and library, overtopped by its chapel. To the right, also in the distance, the Museum tower, and the new Radcliffe Library (p. 78) at its foot, bring us to our starting-point (p. 80).

So we return, over the seven segments of the roof, down the darksome corkscrew of the seventy steps, to the glass door and the step beyond, which plant us again in the rotunda.

### *Farewell Views.*

Before departing from the buildings, let us give two good-bye glances at them,

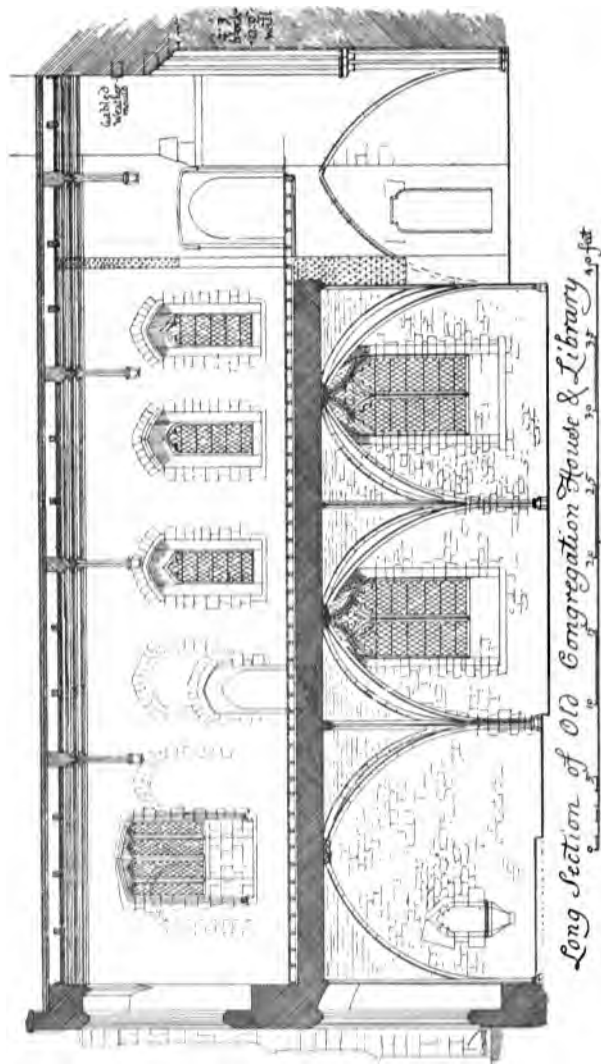
## 86 ANNEXES, OLD AND NEW

taking them as a group. First, we go to the north, to where the statue of Edward, Lord Clarendon, attired in Lord Chancellor's robes and holding the bag containing the Great Seal, looks down from his niche over the south door of the Old Clarendon building (p. 23). Here we have, on the left, the north wing of the Schools; on the right, the Sheldonian D; and, between these, some bays of Duke Humfrey, and the angle of the Selden end.

Our final view, from the south, brings together the whole assemblage of buildings we have traversed. We stand in Cat Street, with our back to the door which gives access to All Souls College (the Codrington) library. Looking south, we have, humble beginning of the library, Cobham's library (p. 87) over the darksome Old Congregation House, set in the nook between the tower and the chancel of St. Mary's. Looking north and north-west, we have the angle made by the east and south sides of the Schools, joined on to the Selden end by a glimpse of Duke Humfrey. In front is the Radcliffe Camera.



PLATE XIII





## CHAPTER V

### HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY

#### *Thomas de Cobham's Library.*

THOMAS DE COBHAM, bishop of Worcester, was so zealous a patron of books that men called him 'the good clerk'. He conceived the design of leaving his books to the University; and, for their accommodation, proposed, about 1320, to add a story to the Old Congregation House on the north of St. Mary's chancel. The rector of St. Mary's was Adam de Brome, who was then arranging for the impropriation of the rectory in order to found Oriel College. Cobham made agreement to pay Brome for the building, and to provide an endowment for two chaplains to say mass for the founder's soul and take care of his books. But when Cobham died in 1327 the windows of the room were still unglazed and unshuttered, and so little money was left by him that his executors pawned his books to pay for his funeral. The utmost they

## 88 HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY

did to fulfil his promise to Oxford was, so to speak, to hand over the pawn-tickets to Adam de Brome, and empower him to redeem the books at his own expense. Having paid £50 for this redemption, Brome naturally regarded the library as his own property. He entrenched himself in the new upper room by bolts and bars, and sent the books to Oriel to be the nucleus of a library there. At Oriel they remained for ten years. In 1337, when Oriel was empty in the depths of the Long Vacation, it was suddenly invaded by the Vice-Chancellor, a Proctor, and a little army of Masters of Arts, come to claim, and forcibly carry off, Cobham's books. The College thus lost the books, but it determined, as rector of St. Mary's, to retain possession of the building intended for them. If it could find no higher use for the room, it was content to store there a builder's lumber. In May 1367 the University discovered, or invented, a deed dated 1201, in which the Old Congregation House was mentioned as the property of the University 125 years before the foundation of Oriel. Through its Chancellor, William de Courtenay (afterwards Primate), the University now demanded restitution of the building, along with the room built over it. The controversy went on till 1410, when it was

## THOMAS DE COBHAM'S LIBRARY 89

referred to the arbitrament of Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury. He decided in favour of the University, but honeyed his decision by a gift of money to the College. This award was immediately confirmed by Henry IV, who also gave a small endowment to the Library, now at last constituted.

The present appearance of the building is hopelessly unlike what it was, when it served as the library. Then its outward wall showed its structure and use. There was on the ground floor the Congregation House, with large two-light windows. Above was the Library with a more continuous wall, pierced by smaller single-light windows. The aspect was not dissimilar to that of Duke Humfrey (p. 27). At the end of the fifteenth century this wall was rebuilt, and the present three-light windows inserted, to give the building the appearance of being only one story. Structural truth was thus sacrificed to a petty desire to make the building east of the tower resemble externally the north aisle.

The custodian of the scholar-bishop's library, thus placed in the house designed for it, was of course a cleric, who had the double duty of keeping open the Library, and saying the yearly masses for the souls of

## 90 HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY

benefactors of the University. His stipend was £5 6s. 8d. a year. Cobham's Library found a warm and constant patron in Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester. This prince has been credited with the scholarly enthusiasm of Chaucer's poor clerk, regarding his books as his sole earthly treasure, and writing in them for his ex-libris :

Mon bien mondain ;

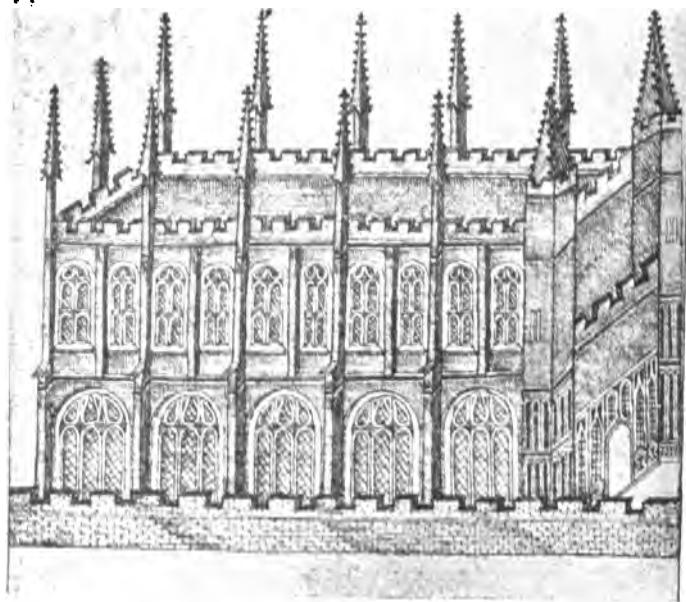
but the two extant MSS. which bear that motto are not the Duke's, but belonged to his physician, Gilbert Kymer, afterwards Chancellor of Oxford.

In 1439 the Duke sent to the Library, as his first gift, 129 manuscripts, and, in the next seven years, enriched it by some 500 more. The University, joyous at possessing a patron of such princely munificence, artfully discovered a way for his further liberality.

### *The Divinity School, 1427.*

The secular clerics of the University had long, with sore hearts, beheld the greater opulence of the Regulars and the fine buildings of the Friars. The University buildings were few and insignificant. The scattered schools, in which its members taught

SCHOLA THEOLOGICA.



BEREBLOCK'S SKETCH OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL


*To face p. 90]*



## THE DIVINITY SCHOOL, 1427 91

and disputed, were the property of, and rented from, the monks of Oseney or St. Frideswyde's, or the nuns of Godstow, Littlemore, or Studley. The teachers and students of the most highly esteemed and frequented Faculty, Theology ('queen and empress of the Faculties' Flemyng, bishop of Lincoln, termed it in 1427), had to perform the exercises of their Faculty in the cloisters and spacious churches of the Four Orders of Friars.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the University earnestly appealed to the secular clergy throughout England to free the Faculty of Theology from this domination of the Regulars. As a result of the appeal, the University, in 1427, was able to begin the Divinity School on a worthy scale. Unfortunately, Henry VI shortly afterwards commenced, under the direction of William of Waynflete, his buildings at Eton and Windsor. The skilled workmen who had been assembled at Oxford were commandeered for the king's service, thus delaying the completion of the Divinity School till 1480. Owing to this interruption the designer's plans were never carried out, and the curious eye can everywhere trace, in the interior of the School, carving blocked out in rough outline but never executed.



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### *Duke Humfrey's Library, 1488.*

During the slow progress of the Divinity School, a brilliant idea, possibly suggested by the old superimposition of Cobham's Library on the Congregation House, flashed on the University, viz. that, before removing the scaffolding, a second story might be added, at small cost, to house those 'preciose bokes' in a larger room, more worthy of them. Accordingly, July 14, 1444, a deft epistle was sent to Duke Humfrey, narrating the intention of the University to provide a better library-room, of which they begged him to accept the great title of FOUNDER.

The net was not spread in vain. The book-loving prince at once intimated his desire to bequeath £100 towards the fabric and 'all the Latyn bokes that he had' to furnish its shelves. He died intestate in 1447, and it was with difficulty that the University obtained the bounty which its patron had promised. Three of the Duke's manuscripts are in the Bodleian; others have drifted into other libraries, St. John's, Oriel, and Corpus Christi, in Oxford; Earl Fitzwilliam's; Mr. H. Yates Thompson's; the British Museum; and the Bibliothèque Nationale and Bibliothèque Ste. Geneviève at Paris.



## DUKE HUMFREY'S LIBRARY 93

To Duke Humfrey's Library belong two lamentable histories. Polydore Vergil, writing, in and after 1502, the history of England, at the request of Henry VII, had recourse to its stores. The careful librarian, noting a coincidence between the Italian's visits and the disappearances of books, applied the well-known inductive 'method of agreement', and refused him further access. Vergil thereupon disappeared from Oxford, but only to return with a mandate from Henry VII, that he might take out any manuscript he pleased. The genealogy of this story is that Alexander Nowell (B. A. 1536; Dean of St. Paul's, 1560) told it to Thomas James (Bodley's first librarian), who passed it on to Brian Twyne (the first Keeper of the Archives).

The robbery begun by one chartered thief was completed by a licensed robber-band. In 1550 Edward VI's advisers sent a commission to purge Oxford libraries of 'superstitious books'. Publicly, these Commissioners made a show of devout zeal, by burning geometrical manuscripts because the diagrams were deemed magical signs, and manuscripts of the Gospels because the Greek letters were thought to belong to the black art. Privately, they wrought even worse destruction. The parchment of manuscripts had a ready sale

## 94 HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY

for mechanical uses, to be cut up into measures and shapes for tailors, and guards and covers for bookbinders. So covetousness dispersed manuscripts which fanaticism spared. A viperish suggestion has been made that Richard Cox, the arch-visitor, a Cambridge man who had come to Oxford as a canon of Wolsey's Cardinal College and had been made the first Dean of Christ Church, took the opportunity of exalting his Alma Mater by intensifying the ruin of her sister-rival.

When the tyrant Commission departed, it left the University subject to creatures of its own spirit. In 1556 the authorities instituted a committee of six to strip the Library of its bookshelves and benches, and sell the timber for what it would fetch. So, of the library built and equipped (in the old formula of a papal confirmation) 'by graunting of bisshopsis, liberalnys of kynges, yevyng of pryncis, and offryng of true pepul', there remained only a bare room, with leaking roof, slowly passing to rottenness and ruin.

*Sir Thomas Bodley.*

Within few years after the departure of the Commission of ruin, there came to Oxford that Devonshire lad, who was to be the means of repairing what was destroyed,



*To face p. 91*

SIR THOMAS BODLEY



and making good what was lost. Thomas Bodley, born in 1545, and educated at Frankfurt-on-Main and Geneva during the Marian persecution, entered Magdalen College in 1559, already skilled in tongues both ancient and living. He became Fellow of Merton College in 1563; and there taught Greek, and studied Hebrew.

A hundred years later, old men in Oxford were still repeating the shameful story of the pillage of the University and College libraries, as they had heard it told when they first came to College:—‘a cart-load of manuscripts carried out of Merton College library,’ and the like. We can imagine how burning, when Bodley was in Oxford, was the sense of wrong and contumely among those who had actually seen these outrages.

Bodley travelled on the continent, 1576–80, to perfect himself in modern languages, and his calling as a diplomatist kept him abroad, 1585–96, but he ever cherished remembrances of Oxford, of Merton walk along its south wall, and of the empty and desecrated shrine of learning under its north wall. So, when a competent fortune, acquired by marriage with a rich widow, released him from public service, he turned in his fifty-first year to ‘the Librariere in Oxō’, with a fixed purpose to reduce ‘that place (<sup>w<sup>ch</sup></sup> then in every part

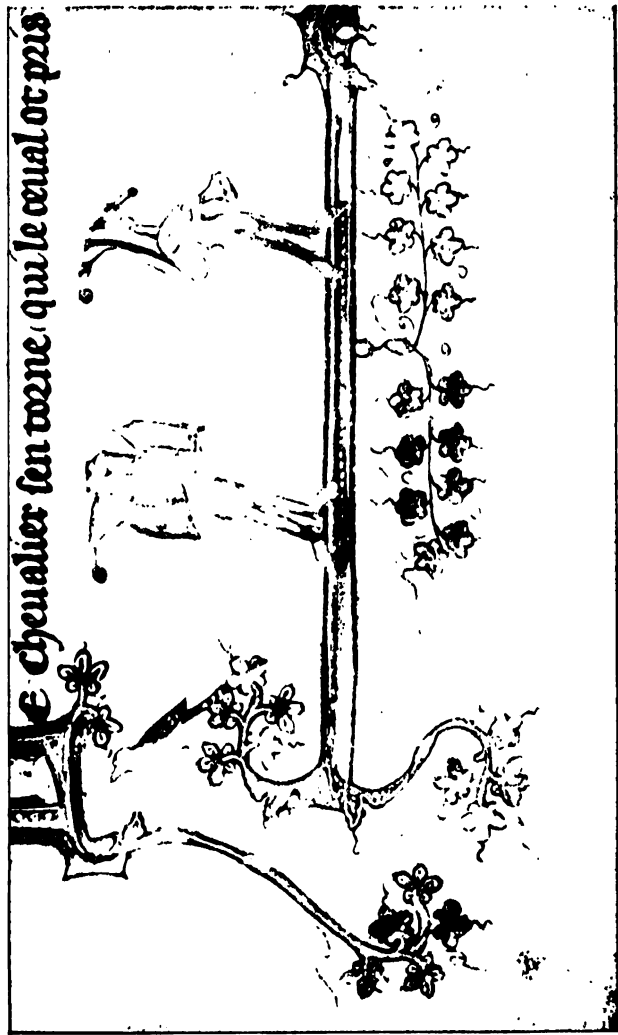
## 96 HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY

laye ruined and wast) to the publique use of Students', (1) by fitting it once more with bookcases and seats, (2) by obtaining books, and (3) by endowing it with a yearly revenue.

### *Restoration of Duke Humfrey, 1600.*

In February, 1598, Bodley made known his intention to the University; and his old College, Merton, promptly offered timber for the work. His project was naturally the talk of the town. One lady, hearing the garbled report that 'the books and shelves which were there before were all burnt', prettily wished 'longer endurance for those which he now puts in'. On beginning operations Bodley discovered that the three works he had contemplated must be preceded by one other, viz. providing a new roof. This roof (p. 46) was built, and the shelving and seats made and put in place, by June, 1600.

Meanwhile, Bodley had been exerting all his influence and powers of persuasion, to obtain from every quarter books, or money to buy books; and had also provided a noble register (p. 43) for recording these gifts. Unnoticed in this register, and therefore probably the gift of Bodley himself, is a



FOOT OF PAGE OF THE ALEXANDER ROMANCE

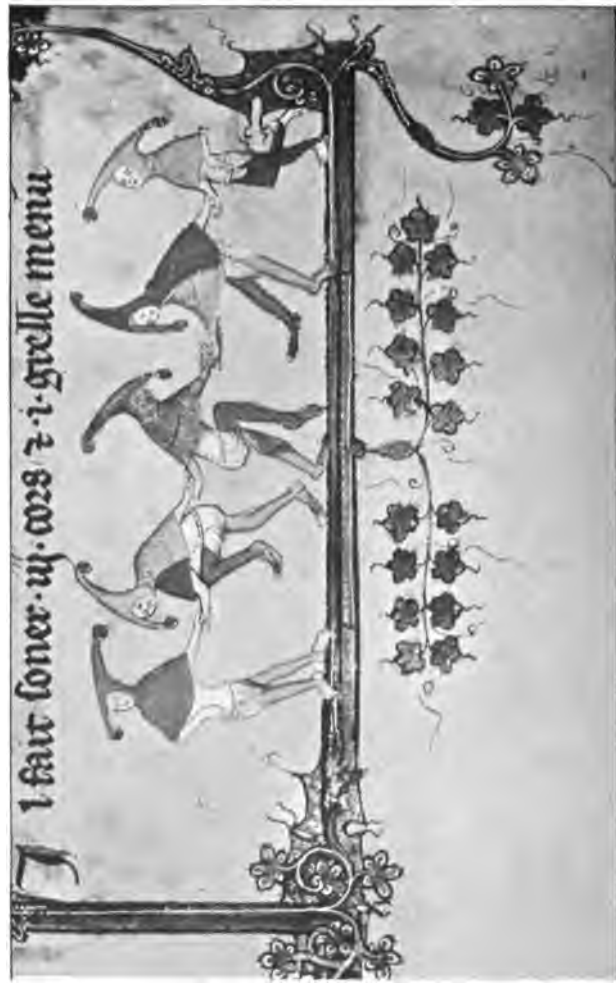


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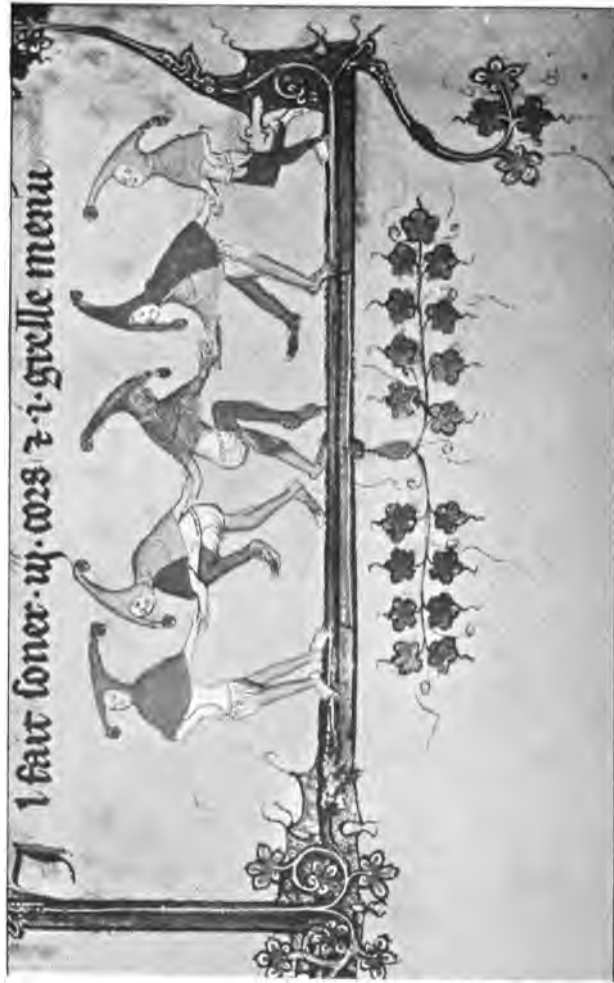




## RESTORATION OF HUMFREY 97

manuscript of French Alexander-romances and of Marco Polo's travels, in part richly decorated with beautiful paintings on a chequered background of gold and colour, and adorned on other pages with those quaint pictures of customs, trades, games, which, engraved for Joseph Strutt, enliven the pages of his *Manners and Customs*, his *Dresses and Habits*, and his *Sports and Pastimes of the people of England*, published 1774-99. An inscription inside the cover states that 'richart de Wideuielle seigneur de riuieres' bought it in London on New Year's day 1466.

The Library was formally opened by the Vice-Chancellor on November 8, 1602, and that day is still kept as an anniversary. On each 8th of November (or 7th, if the 8th be a Sunday) the Library doors remain shut, and the Curators within the Library hold solemn conference as to its welfare. Only on a very few occasions, has a different day been taken for 'the Visitation'. 1695 was such a year, because William III had fixed for November 9 that state visit at which he refused to touch the banquet which the University, at a cost of £500, had provided for him in the Sheldonian, from dread (it was whispered) of poison in cup or platter. The 1695 Visitation was held on November 11.



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## 100 HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY

The Bookes that are conteined within this Lybrarie are verie rare, straunge, and scarce, seldome or not at all to be heard of or seene in any place but there. All of them verie richlie guilded, and manye of them bossed either with Siluer or Golde. All these are so fairelie kept and maintained, as if the Goddesse of *Wisdom*e hadde selected and reserued it a Paradice to entertaine the Muses.'

### *The Bodley Wing, 1612.*

In 1605, within three years of its opening, the need of more shelf-room for books, and of more seats for readers, had begun to be acutely felt. Accordingly, in 1610, Bodley commenced an addition at the east end of the Library, and completed it by 1612. This was the Proscholium (p. 18), with the noble room (p. 35) over it. Part of the timber of the roof was given by the King from the royal wood of Shotover, east of Oxford.

### *The New Schools, 1619.*

It has been mentioned (p. 92) that the inception of the Library came from the Schools, 'Duke Humfrey' being an after-thought superimposed on the Divinity

## THE NEW SCHOOLS, 1619 101

School. It must now be noted that, by poetic justice, the Library repaid its debt in the same coin. Bodley, finding that his Library-building had excited much interest, boldly started the idea of taking down the old 1439 Schools of Arts, and making his Bodley wing (pp. 16, 100) only the west side of 'a compleat quadrangular pile'. When this idea prospered, he further urged that the work should be crowned and completed by a third story, the noble Picture Gallery (p. 57). At the time of his death, January, 1613, this further project was so far on the way to realization that Bodley was able to bequeath part of his property towards its completion.

The New Schools, therefore, with the Picture Gallery over them, were begun in 1613 as an offshoot from the Bodley wing, which was then approaching completion, and were opened in 1619. Now, the Bodleian has annexed them all, as Time, in Greek mythology, devours his children.

### *The Selden End, 1640.*

At the time of Bodley's death, January 28, 1613, a project had been mooted to balance the Bodley eastern wing by a corresponding

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western wing, so bringing the whole building into the form it still retains of a T standing on a square. See the diagram, p. 32.

This wing provided on the ground floor a Convocation House (p. 25) and Vice-Chancellor's Court, and, in the second story, a large library, so reproducing the oldest existing combination of University buildings, the Old Congregation House with Cobham's library over it (p. 89). Bodley, in his will, left money towards this building. The site was bought from Exeter College for £265. The foundation-stone was laid May 13, 1634. The fabric was completed in 1635 at a cost of £2,820. The fitting up of the two stories cost £1,130, and was not finished till 1640. Its completion had been urgently called for by the state of the Library. Between 1633 and 1640 Archbishop Laud forwarded no less than 1,200 manuscripts of the first value. In 1634, Sir Kenelm Digby (p. 65) sent a noble collection of 238 manuscripts. There being no shelf-room for them, these great accessions were at first dumped down on the floor of the Archives room in the Schools Tower, but in 1641, they were placed on the shelves of the gallery in the western wing. This wing was at first called 'Laud's Library'; but after 1659, when John Selden's manuscripts and printed books (about 8,000



volumes in all) were placed here, it became known as 'Mr. Selden's Library'.

The floor of the Selden end long continued clear of cases, and supplied the University with a large room suitable for unusual functions. Here, for example, the University entertained Sir Thomas Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell, May 19, 1649, the banquet costing £20; the wine, £5; and a present of gloves, £10. Here also, Sept. 28, 1663, Charles II was entertained (p. 51), the bills being: banquet, £270; wine, £7; gloves, £60. Here also, Sept. 5, 1687, James II was entertained, the bills being: banquet, £213; a rich bible and gloves, £23; and a tip to his yeomen of the guard, £10 15s.

### *Later History of the Library.*

The later history of the Library consists mainly of magnificent accessions, by gift or bequest, of printed books, manuscripts, coins, and pictures. In respect of the sinews of war, the Library has been less fortunate, having received only two considerable gifts for the general expenses of the Library. Beginning in 1751, the Library has had £70 a year from the bounty of Nathaniel, Lord Crewe (p. 51), Bishop of Durham. In

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1841 Robert Mason (p. 8), D.D., bequeathed £36,000. Space for the accessions has been secured, step by step, but frequently (as has been seen) sadly to the damage of the buildings, by appropriating, in the way already described, rooms in the 1619 Schools, in the Sheldonian, and in the Old Ashmolean, and by using the Picture Gallery. The latest acquisition of shelf-room is the grant made in June, 1904, of basement-rooms in the New Examination Schools in High Street.

### *Tercentenary.*

The Library celebrated its Tercentenary on Oct. 8 and 9, 1902, by conferring Honorary Degrees on seventeen distinguished savants in a great Convocation in the Theatre, on which occasion the Public Orator summed up the history of the Library in a deft Latin oration; by a reception in the New Ashmolean Museum, a great gathering made brilliant by the resplendent robes of representatives of foreign Universities and great libraries; and by a dinner in Christ Church Hall, which can never have re-echoed to so much friendly talk in so many tongues. Congratulatory addresses and messages were received from 117 great libraries and learned societies 'from China to Peru'.

**For the Tercentenary the University Press published a magnificent sketch of the history of the Library, 'Pietas Oxoniensis, in memory of Sir Thomas Bodley, Kt., and the foundation of the Bodleian Library,' written by members of the Library staff, a copy of which was presented to every representative sent to attend the celebration.**



## CHAPTER VI

### MISCELLANEOUS INCIDENTS AND NOTES

FROM the annals of the Library we may cull a few notes illustrative of the fateful vicissitudes of books.

#### *Losing and Getting.*

We have seen (p. 98) how Edward VI's Vandal Commission swept bare the University Library of books. The same destruction visited the libraries of the Colleges; and, in consequence, the Bodleian now possesses manuscripts which once graced the shelves of All Souls, Lincoln, Merton, New College, and Oriel libraries, but were lost during the Edwardian visitation.

In its first years the Bodleian was enriched by strange acts of contemporary peculation, breach of trust, and even piracy.

In 1601 the Library received from Thomas Allen, the astrologer, erstwhile Fellow of Trinity College, and the subject of the most amusing of John Aubrey's gossipy *Brief*

*Lives*, a Greek treatise in defence of the use of images, with arms blazoned on its first leaf which showed it to have belonged to Henry VIII. Just two years before, this book had been in New College library, whence it had been stolen in 1599 during the crush of visitors who were shown over that library at what corresponded to our Commemoration week. In 1600, Thomas James, of New College, had noted the theft in his printed Catalogue of the College library. It is singular that next year, as Librarian of the Bodleian, he accepted it without a murmur. This gives colour to the suggestion that James's own large gift of manuscripts, also made in 1601, consisted chiefly of abstractions from Oxford College libraries, to which he had had access on pretext of cataloguing them. The removal of a manuscript from an obscure, semi-private library, to the great, public institution under his own charge perhaps struck him not as an abuse of opportunity but as the promotion of the manuscript to a nobler sphere of usefulness. Added suspicion comes from the fact that several MSS. which James had catalogued as in the library of Pembroke College, Cambridge, now found their way into the Bodleian.

The same year, 1601, enriched the Library by a conspicuous breach of trust. The Dean

and Chapter of Exeter, ignoring their successors' interest in the patrimony of their Church, sent to the Library eighty-one Latin manuscripts of the highest value, including eight given to Exeter Cathedral by Bishop Leofric between 1050 and 1072. Bodley was a native of Exeter, and this fact seems to have weighed more with the warm-hearted and clannish Devonians than the malediction (in Latin and English) which their Bishop had inserted in his manuscripts :—

‘This book Leofric the bishop gives to the church of St. Peter the Apostle in Exeter, his bishop’s seat, for the healing of his soul and for the use of his successors. If any man shall have taken it thence, may he lie under an everlasting curse. Amen.’

The expedition which Elizabeth sent out, in 1596, to vex the Spaniard, disgraced itself by carrying off the library of Hierome Osorius from the little port of Faro in Portugal, where he had been bishop. In 1600 some of the books reached the Bodleian. Fanciful students may think that the axe on Tower Hill, which smote off the heads of the leaders of that expedition, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, in 1603, and Sir Walter Raleigh, in 1617, bears out Horace’s creed that slow-footed punishment yet surely overtakes misdeed.

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 Hunc librum ꝥ dæ leofricus eþs ecclē scti petri apli in  
 exonia ad solem suā episcopale ꝥ remedio animę sue ad ual-  
 tatem successorū suoz. Siqꝫ autē illū inde absterit ꝥ petre  
 maliditioni subiaceat. fiat.

ƿar boc gef leofric b̄ into sctē petres missie on exancesque  
 þær hiȝ biȝcopstol is. hiȝ æfter þilgindū to ætȝeowdunge  
 7 gef hiȝ hpa ut ætȝede. hæbbe he ece geŋdeþung mid  
 eallū deoflum. Am.





The Bodleian itself, of course, has, all through its history, been exposed to like perils. Complaints of stolen books, of pages abstracted from manuscripts, and of pamphlets cut out of composite volumes, meet us fitfully in its annals. About 1656, Thomas Marshall, of Lincoln College, an English chaplain in Holland, found a Bodleian mathematical manuscript exposed for sale in an Amsterdam bookseller's shop, bought it, and sent it back. Ten years earlier, when the Royalists surrendered Oxford, men had greatly feared that the victorious Parliamentary army would make the riches of the Library prize-of-war. Rumours were flying that Cardinal Jules Mazarin, then forming his great library, had £40,000 at call to buy the manuscripts if they came to auction. Sir Thomas Fairfax's first act, on taking over the town, June 24, 1646, was to put a strong guard to protect the Library.

*John Milton.*

A singular chapter in the history of the Library is that which tells of its dealings with the works of Milton, verse and prose.

In 1645 he sent to the Library a copy of his newly published *Poems, both English and Latin*. Next year the book was reported

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'missing'. It seems a natural guess to attribute its abstraction to the animosity of some cavalier, a friend of the neighbouring Powells of Forest Hill, taking the lady's part in the bitter quarrel between Milton and his wife, Mary Powell, and offended by the Library's harbouring a book by the author of the dreadful *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*. The Librarian, John Rous, asked Milton to make good the loss; and, on January 23, 1646 (1647 in our reckoning), Milton penned an Ode to John Rous, said to be the latest set of Latin verses he wrote, to accompany a copy of the *Poems* to the Bodleian.

The antipathy to Milton, increased by his acting as Latin Secretary to the Commonwealth, again showed itself in June, 1660, when order was made by Convocation that his works should be cast out of the Library. They were bought privately by Thomas Barlow, the Librarian; and returned to the Library at his death (p. 48).

The atrocity of the Rye-house Plot, aiming at the assassination of the King and his brother, excited intense feelings at Oxford, which had been recently visited by the Duke of York, who had shown himself most affable. On July 21, 1683, the University, in solemn Convocation, pub-

licly made a bonfire of anti-Royalist literature in the Great Quadrangle (p. 12) of the Schools. Among the books committed to the flames were Milton's 'pieces in defence of the king's murder'. The annalist omits to say whether the tracts in question (*Tenure of kings . . . proving that it is lawful to call to account . . . a wicked king, and . . . to put him to death*, 1649; *pro populo Anglicano defensio*, 1651; *Defensio secunda*, 1654) were brought from the Library or supplied by the Vice-Chancellor.

*Singularities of the Statutes.*

Sir Thomas Bodley, in the Statutes which (according to one account) he drafted in 1599, provided that the Librarian should have a stipend of £22 13s. 4d., and, perhaps from personal reminiscence of the trials of married life, ordered that the Librarian should not marry. He was, naturally, deeply vexed when his chosen Librarian, Dr. Thomas James, ere the ink with which the Statutes were written was thoroughly dry, called on the Statute-maker to become Statute-breaker. James demanded a salary of £40 a year, a sum which had not yet received that repute of meagreness which Oliver Goldsmith's verse has since given it. He also asked leave to

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marry. Bodley, reluctantly, gave way; but urged that never, never, in future, should the Curators of the Library endure a married Librarian. This requirement of celibacy continued in force till 1813. On October 18, 1602, in St. Thomas's Church, Oxford, Thomas James married Ann Underhill of St. Martin's parish.

Another provision of Bodley's Statutes renders the Library unique among its peers. This is the absolute prohibition of lending printed books or manuscripts out of the Library. Through evil report and good, after argument and counter-argument, this Statute has, in the main, been enforced. Lord Chancellor Clarendon's state-papers have preserved a slip which tells how Bodleian fidelity, sorely tempted, yet remained true. On one of his last days in Oxford, Charles I desired a book to read, to wile away a long winter evening. So, December 30, 1645, there came the order:—

‘Deliver unto the bearer hereof, for the present use of his Maiesty, a Book Intituled *Histoire Universelle du Sieur D'Aubigné*: and this shall be your warrant:’

counter-signed, by the Vice-Chancellor,

‘His Maiestye's use is in commaund to us.  
S. Fell, Vice Can.’



PEMBROKE AND LAUD

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Instead of obeying, the Librarian went to the King, with his Statutes; and Charles obligingly withdrew his unstatutable demand.

In April 1654, Oliver Cromwell, as Lord Protector, wrote to ask the loan of a manuscript for the Portuguese ambassador. There was sent, in answer, a copy of the prohibitory Statute. Thereupon, the Lord Protector wrote again, withdrawing his request, and 'commending the prudence of the Founder, who had made the place so sacred'.

### *St. Margaret of Scotland's Evangel-book.*

Singular, and almost beyond belief, is the history attaching to a Latin Gospels for select days, i. e. portions used in the Mass, acquired by the Library in 1887, for £6, at a London auction. The manuscript was found to be of the eleventh century, and to have four full-page illuminations of characteristic English work of the period just before the Norman Conquest. On its fly-leaf were verses describing a miracle which had occurred to it. One day, when on its way to a trysting-place to have an oath taken upon it, it had, unknown to the priest who was carrying it, slipped out of his robe into a stream, whence a soldier recovered it by accident some time after. Now comes the miracle. The

book had sustained no damage 'except on the two leaves, which you may see on either side, where from the waves appears a shrinkage'. Sure enough, these two leaves are somewhat shrivelled by the action of water. The poem ends with prayers for the good estate of the King and saintly Queen who own the book. Now just this very story is related in the life of Margaret, the canonized consort of Malcolm Canmore, King of Scotland, written by her confessor. Putting together the story and the features of the manuscript, it is no idle fancy to assume that this is the very volume used by the saintly queen when she attended service in the abbey of Dunfermline, which she founded. But who can guess the path by which the volume had travelled from the cabinet of Queen Margaret, who died in 1093, to the obscure parish library in Suffolk, where, during the eighteenth century, it lay hidden, a treasure unvalued and uncared for.

*The Penalty of a Mistake.*

The most famous passage in the history of the Library relates to the rejection, and the recovery, of the 1623 First Folio of Shakespeare. It was the practice of the Library, all through its early days, to part freely with its 'duplicates'. Since the conception of the



## THE PENALTY OF A MISTAKE 115

library at that time was purely utilitarian, the last edition of a book was looked on as the best, and was most valued. Bibliographical ideas of the value of different editions were as yet unknown. Hence this history.

In 1623 or 1624 the Stationers' Company of London, under an agreement concluded with the Founder on December 12, 1610, sent to the Library, in sheets, the newly published first complete edition of Shakespeare's works. On February 17, 1623-4, the work was sent to an Oxford bookbinder, William Wildgoose; and, when returned, was duly chained among the Arts books. It is mentioned in the Supplementary Catalogue of 1635. In the Catalogue of 1674 it is absent, its place being taken by the Third Folio, which had appeared in 1664, and contained seven additional plays then attributed to Shakespeare. For years the dreadful suspicion had been entertained in the Library, though kept a profound secret, that, when this 1664 edition arrived, the edition of 1623 was unchained, and, about September of that year, was cast into a pile of 'superfluous books, sold by order of the Curators' to Richard Davis, then the leading Oxford bookseller, who paid £24 for the lot. On January 23, 1905, the son of the owner of a First Folio consulted the Bodleian about

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repairing it. Marvel of marvels, this proved to be the missing volume. It had been acquired, in 1759, by Richard Turbutt of Ogston Hall, Derbyshire, and had remained in the library there ever since. In March, 1906, an appeal by Bodley's Librarian secured the £3,000 required to meet an American bid for the unique volume; and so, after 242 years of absence, it returned to the Bodleian. Never again is a volume with an equally marvellous history likely to come into the market. It is the uniqueness of its former Bodleian ownership which caused the leap-up in the price-thermometer of First Folio Shakespeares, the readings of which are: 1778, £17s.; 1812, £100; 1864, £716; 1887, £785; 1901, £1,720; 1906, £3,000. An Oxford bursar of the old school, when reproached for willingness to accept a large bid for a property intimately connected with the history of his College, is reported to have said 'Sentiment has its price!' We see here, a reverse picture, the cost of Bodleian sentiment.

### *Changed Points of View.*

The transaction noticed in the preceding section cannot be rightly understood, unless we take into account the aversion which

academic Oxford then had for light literature in a modern tongue. Even a century afterwards, when works of this class obtained a specific name, they were stamped with the contemptuous, borrowed title of *belles lettres*. A play of Seneca had the hall-mark of classical antiquity, and was of value. A play of Shakespeare carried with it degrading associations of mouthers in village barns and town innyards, rogues and vagabonds who escaped the whip of the petty constable only by calling themselves the 'servants' of some lord. Bodley himself thought little of 'play-books', and despised the 'infinite number' of other light books which issued from the press of his day. The admission of any of these to his library would, in his opinion, disgrace it. What the Bodleian would now be valued at, had it received only the divinity, medicine, and law books which its Founder honoured, is too difficult a problem to tackle. Fortunately, almost from Bodley's day, scholars of deeper insight have continuously gathered up homely English prose and verse, and enriched the Library with erstwhile 'frivolous trash', now beyond price. Earliest of these accessions were the English plays, pamphlets, and jest-books of Robert Burton, author of the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, bequeathed in 1640. They include one of the

only two known copies of the 1602 edition of *Venus and Adonis*. Next in order of time of formation, though it was exiled in the Ashmolean Library (p. 24) from 1695 to 1860, is Anthony Wood's collection of fugitive verse and prose. Greater, both in intrinsic value, and by wonder of their late bringing together, are the splendid English library of Edmund Malone, received in 1821, and the magnificent bequest of Francis Douce, 1834. The Bodleian has thus become a world's treasure-house of letters by violating its Founder's express wish and accumulating the things that he despised.

*Chances Missed.*

Every library of long standing has some laments to make over might-have-beens, which, through some fault of the library itself or of others, have proved were-nots. Some Bodleian laments may, therefore, be uttered.

Shortly after the Restoration the marvellous collection of Civil War pamphlets made by George Thomason, the London bookseller, was offered for purchase to the Bodleian and refused. The British Museum is now the happy owner both of these Thomason tracts and of the Cole manuscripts, presently to be mentioned.

In 1665 the Library lost the balance of Sir Kenelm Digby's library (p. 102) by the exercise of an old perquisite of the crown of France, the *droit d'aubaine*. When Digby went into exile during the Civil War, he took his library with him. When he returned to England at the Restoration, he neglected to bring it back. Consequently, at his death, it was confiscated by the King of France as belonging to an alien, and sold for 10,000 crowns. It will be remembered that, in 1765, when the Cambridge antiquary, William Cole, thought of settling in France, Horace Walpole warned him of the danger into which he would thereby bring his Collections.

You would not, I think, leave your MSS. behind you : and are you aware what danger they would run if you settled entirely in France? Do you know that the king of France is heir to all strangers who die in his dominions, by what they call the *droit d'aubaine*? Sometimes, by great interest and favour, persons have obtained a release of this right in their life time; and yet that, even that, has not secured their effects from being embezzled. . . . You see, if you go, I shall expect your MSS. to be deposited with me. Seriously, you must leave them in safe custody behind you.

In 1710 the Bodleian bid of £8,000 for the great classical library of Isaac Vossius

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was rejected; but the collection was afterwards sold to Leyden University for that sum. Underhand Court intrigue was believed to have turned the scales against the Oxford library.

About 1866 Sir Thomas Phillipps had actually begun delivering in the Camera the cases containing his library of manuscripts, which he proposed bestowing on the University. He afterwards changed his purpose. Had he adhered to it, the Bodleian collection of manuscripts would have been more than doubled, and the greatest library ever brought together by a British bibliophile would have remained undispersed.

### *Ethics of Ownership.*

In the old ballad Queen Elizabeth is represented as breaking out upon the chief of the marauding clan Scott, in the vigorous verse :—

It ill becomes ye, bauld Buccleugh,  
to talk o' reif and felonye;  
For, if every man had his ain coo,  
a richt puir clan your name wad be.

Complex questions of this kind are raised by several manuscripts and books in the Bodleian. The Library contains treasures not



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only taken from other libraries (p. 106), but from other libraries which are still in unbroken existence and certainly never willingly or wittingly parted with their property. What is to be done with these? The Bodleian answer has varied. In 1810 the Library restored to the Bishop of Durham's Chancery the episcopal Register of that see, covering the years 1311-16 and 1338-42, which had come to it as part of Richard Rawlinson's bequest, in 1755, and had been acquired by Rawlinson at the sale of the Harleian Library in 1743.

An earlier project of restoration had miscarried. In 1679, in the register of manuscripts, an entry was made opposite four of them 'Restored to Salisbury by order of the Curators', and the conveyance of the four was entrusted to Dr. John Fell. They never reached Sarum Chapter Library. In the multiplicity of his undertakings, Bishop Fell forgot all about them; and, on his death in 1686, they came back among the contents of his study, bequeathed by him to the Library. They contain Latin *Lives of Saints*, and date from the twelfth century.

In several later instances the Curators have refused applications for return of manuscripts to their undoubted place of origin. A reasonable rule seems to be, that

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libraries should accept the facts of past history, with the dislocations caused by old civil war and old official negligence; but take exceeding care that no stigma of unjust acquisition may attach to any modern accession. The facilities now afforded by photographic reproduction enable other institutions to supply their painful gaps, without inflicting like wounds on collections in the Bodleian.

### *Reunion after Centuries.*

In 1750 the Bodleian bought the first volume of a Vulgate Bible which was printed on vellum by Fust and Schoeffer in 1462. It had come from the collection of Nicholas Joseph Foucault, who died in 1721. The volume was mutilated, several leaves being missing at the end, but their place supplied in writing in a beautiful fifteenth-century hand. In 1817 the Bodleian bought at Venice the great library of manuscripts which had been collected by Mattheo Luigi Canonici. In 1818, in searching a box of fragments which came with the Canonici manuscripts, fourteen leaves of an early Vulgate were discovered. Examination showed that these were actually leaves missing from, and taken from, the Library copy of the Fust

## REUNION AFTER CENTURIES 123

and Schoeffer Vulgate. They were therefore replaced in it; but the volume still requires four leaves to make it perfect.

Not less remarkable is the purchase, recently, at an auction in London, of the Kalendar which was missing from a thirteenth-century MS. bequeathed by Richard Rawlinson in 1755.

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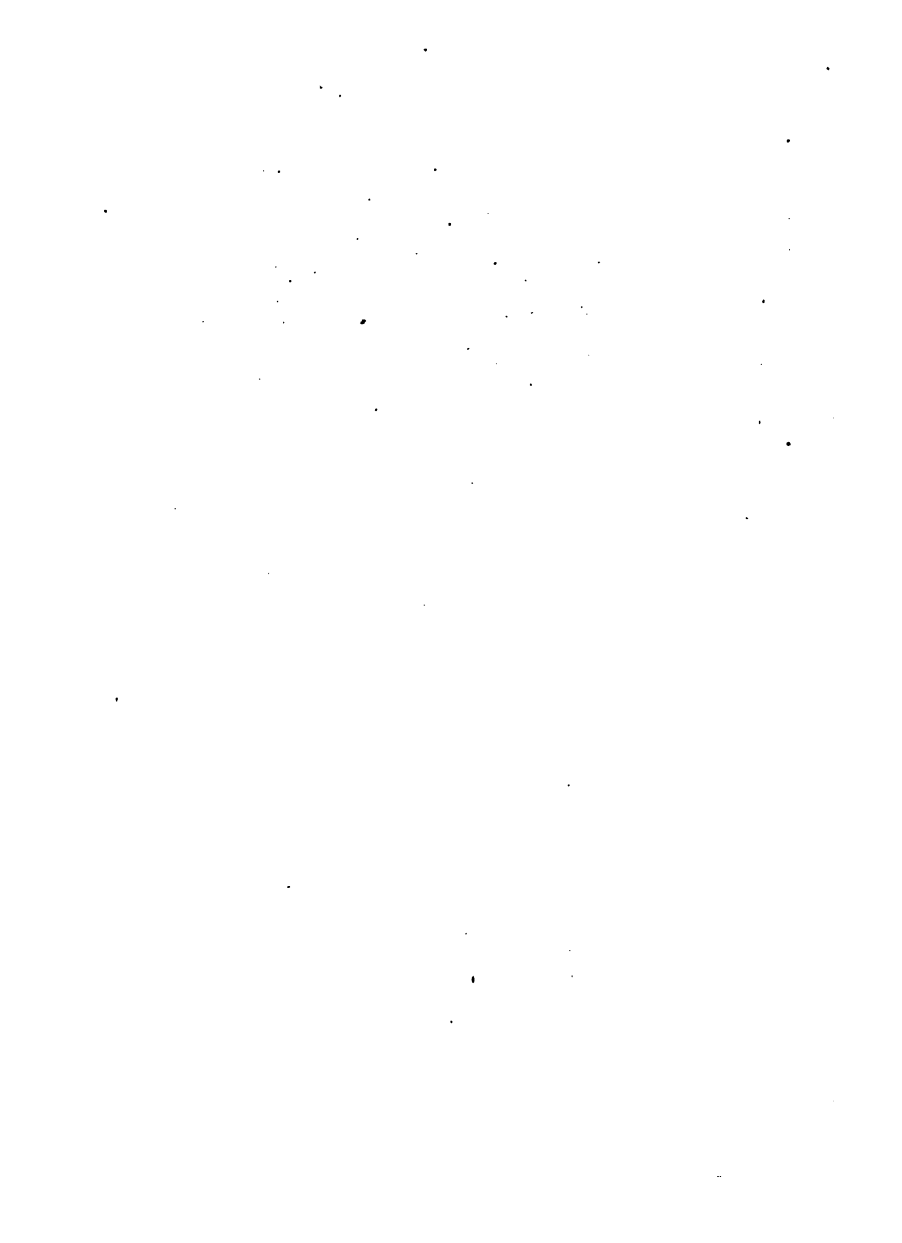
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